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NEW TIMES

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Cover by Victor Brel

Alfred Rubiks. His colleagues, First Party Secretaries, became presidents, he alone landed in jail

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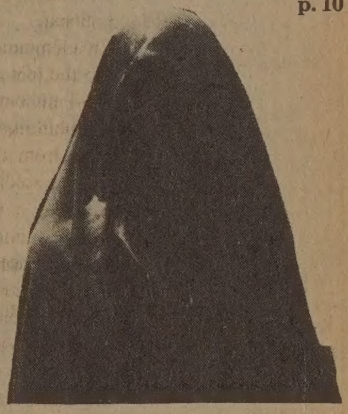

The king was a playboy, yet Saudi women are not even allowed to drive cars

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From our mailbag

■ I am the mother of a gravely and incurably ill boy and am writing to you because you are my last resort. I do not want to live any longer because it's hard for me to see the tortures of my only son. He has a serious form of diabetes and at the age of four became a first-degree invalid. The joys of childhood are over for him. And this makes him and myself cry. There are endless injections and heaps of pills. I have written to our institutes and clinics, to Kashpirovsky and Chumak and have found other people with ESP and quacks.

I hoped that my son could be cured and I still can't accept the idea that everything is over. Our Soviet medicine is powerless. Doctors said there is no use of taking my son anywhere. As a mother, I cannot reconcile

myself to the thought that my son will die. There is no longer anyone on whom I could pin my hopes in our country. For four years I have knocked at all doors. But they remained closed to my boy. I have experienced a lot of humiliation, rudeness and indifference.

I appeal to all people in the world, to all fathers and mothers, all men and women, all doctors of the world. Please help me to cure my only son. I can no longer hear his crying and his plea for aid. My son, who has suffered so much, looks into my eyes and asks me: "Mummy, shall I live? Will they cure me, make an operation? I am anxious to live." I promised him, of course, that he will live, that he will be cured, because there are kind people in the world. That is why I appeal to the whole world. Please, lend your ears to our plea. My boy needs insulin, pen syringes, glucometers, and treatment abroad.

Our address: Russian Federation, 462351, Orenburg Region, Novotroitsk, Zelenaya St. 53, apt. 103, tel. 3-34-81.

Natalya Ovchinnikov

I believe in Russian people

■ I am a former citizen of our much-suffering homeland. I ran away from Stalin's communism. Reading your newspapers and magazines and articles in the foreign press, I feel the desire to repeat the call of our ancestors: "Our land is vast and rich, but there is no order in it. Come to our land, rule and possess us." It is always possible and even necessary to learn from neighbours. However, it is unreasonable, to say the least, to rush from the North to the South Pole, because it is cold in both poles. In the past, we did not let the whiff of capitalism penetrate even through a hole. Today, we pounce on a bone like hungry dogs. And thus we go from one extreme to another. A good master will first look around himself to see what he has, and then go to his neighbour. If possible, he will learn from his neighbour or perhaps will even teach him. As for us, we stand in our yard, gripping hold of everything, and shout for help.

Please, look around. Do you think the Russians and other peoples of our boundless country are so wretched and stupid that, standing on the bank of the river, even before leaping, they shout: "Help, we are sinking." Launching his new economic policy, Lenin was not scared of the hostile environment. He believed in the peoples of Russia, and they justified his confidence. He was not afraid that the New Economic Policy would contradict communism or vice versa. Lenin knew that before building communism the people should be allowed to live decently. He knew that because he had close ties with the people, learned from them and their aspirations. He went with the people, but ahead of them, translating their aspirations into laws.

The Stalin clique turned the people into a mass of slaves. It drew away from them, driving them into the Procrustean bed. The scions of the Stalin regime want to continue their mean humiliation of the people.

They are afraid of losing their cushy jobs. That is why they continue to patch up the rags, giving the least to some people and licences to others. But they do not let the people do the main thing – work for the state and themselves. If they lose the reins they will also lose their still cushy, well-paid jobs and will have to work themselves.

Working people must decide themselves when to work and how – on a collective or state farm, in a company or on their own farms, to sow flax or wheat, rye or hemp, potatoes or millet. They must themselves decide whether to work in a factory or write poems, design interplanetary craft or make shoes, be a scientific worker or a milkmaid on a farm, hire workers or work themselves.

Only free life and free labour to the extent of strength given man by God will stimulate progress in the scientific, technological and cultural fields, and bring about prosperity on our planet. I think it is vitally necessary to continue the cause of *perestroika* initiated by Gorbachev, rise to a higher level of *perestroika* while not shunning foreign experience. It is necessary to accept what is valuable, without being enticed by trumpery. For during the years of building Stalin communism when we lived behind the iron curtain, killing tale after people, other countries moved far ahead of us in many fields of science and technology.

Mikhail Krupe
42 Oxford Terrace, Lower Hutt
New Zealand

Can a teacher judge whether the tsar was good or bad?

Only an anti-snoring ring can save him

'For us Moscow is an embodiment of the evil empire"

■ I am very concerned about one question. Can a history teacher say that the revolution was good and the tsar bad? He who thinks differently gets a bad mark. Our Russian language teacher says that Gorbachev is a fool and Yeltsin is a fine man. I do not interfere in the dispute and simply go out of the classroom. The whole class and teachers laugh at me because I am a non-standard heterodox.

Oleg Koltsov, 14 years old
Yekaterinburg

■ I learned with great interest about a Swedish invention (*NT* No. 2/92) – a plastic semi-ring against snoring. It could be a salvation for me and my family. I tried many means, but they did not help. I am very grateful to your correspondent L.Polyukhov for this item. It inspired hope. Perhaps he could also help me acquire this semi-ring. I will pay for it, but only in rubles.

V.Merzlyakov
Chelyabinsk

■ L.Mlechin's article "A hard nut to crack" (*NT* No. 3/92) evokes sad and angry thoughts. You often write about the situation in the Baltic states, Georgia and Moldova and reflect on the causes of dislike of other peoples for their "Big Brother." But do you know that in the outlying regions of Russia Moscow is hated no less than in Georgia or Lithuania? In other former republics the situation is clear: the Russians are aliens, non-indigenous people, and they are to blame for everything. And whom should we hold responsible? In the opinion of people living in the Far Eastern territories of Russia, Moscow is responsible for hasty and unconsidered political and economic decisions and the possibility of new coups. It is a source of instability.

The Sakhalin shelf belongs to the population of that island, and the Kuril Islands belong to those who live on them. It is absolutely clear. The mineral resources of the shelf must be used only for the well-being of the Sakhalin population, and no one else. Is the Sakhalin governor Fyodorov trying to enhance his reputation? This is natural, it is the basic rule of business. Even if he decides so he will not cede the Kuril Islands to Japan, for besides him there are the people living on these islands and Sakhalin. Fyodorov was right in saying that we have lived without a peace treaty with Japan for 40 years and will live without it for as many years as necessary.

I don't know the sentiments in the West. But here, in the Far East, the people look at the rich Japanese uncle with suspicion. The Koreans, Chinese and Filippinos do not trust Tokyo either. I can understand why the clamour over Sakhalin and the Kuril Islands is growing stronger. Is this realized by others or not, but there is a general feeling that we shall soon secede. We shall secede, longing for Russia but breaking away from Moscow's rule. For many years ahead this city will be an embodiment of the "evil empire." We shall return as soon as the economy of Sakhalin recovers a little thanks to the mineral resources of its shelf. We shall do our best to make the island dear for its indigenous population. Your author is right: the Kuril Islands are not Russian land. But they are not Japanese either. The islands belong to those who live on them.

A.Khmelevsky
Sakhalin

■ I would like your magazine to publish Tatiana Ivanova's articles as often as possible. They are like a clear and honest stream in the ocean of lies cowardice, treachery, incompetence poured on our poor country and people from the pages of many periodicals which now look like the newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya*. The people should hear the truth, not backyard rumours to which many journalists treat our readers and viewers.

Tamara Feoktistova
Moscow

***Compiled by* Tatiana Chernova**

THE WAY I SEE IT

Drawing by Marat Tairov

Previous experience still holds good

The theme of "Russian fascism" can be discerned reflections on the country's future. Fascism is sible if the reforms fail. It will be a result of the rger of Yeltsin populism and Russian ionalism.

n critical periods Russia is drawn to the old rut, to historically established authoritarian and even imial forms of government. Paradoxically enough, Yeltsin leadership repeats the evolution of the Bolviks who, coming to power, switched to the posns previously criticized by them. The trap is that tsin is objectively inclined to adopt the principles l methods he himself buried in the years of *perestika*. In this way he must adopt to some extent the ndpoint of former vice-president Yanayev and his leagues, the struggle against whom makes up a siderable part of Yeltsin's political capital. Yeltsin to choose between populism (democracy), which himself offered, and dictatorship, which disavows as a democrat.

The Russian voters now demand that Yeltsin pursue not a "democratic" but a realistic policy. The traditional idea of Russian statehood can be offered as the only basis of such a policy. It is not fascism, but dictatorship, tough and authoritarian power.

The possibility of overcoming the crisis on the road of democracy (the more so, our present-day, Russian democracy) is doubtful. In present conditions the sliding to chaos can and must be averted by authoritarian power, presidential dictatorship, which is already in its formative stage. The 20th-century history of Russia testifies in favour of such rule. On two occasions the country's progress was ensured precisely by authoritarian regimes. I have in mind the Stolypin policy, which became possible in conditions of the 1907 coup, and the Bolsheviks's New Economic Policy in the early 1920s.

Andrei Papushin
Moscow

POLITICAL LIFE

A February that knuckled under to an October

Russia missed her historic chance for the first time in February 1917. Why were we not able to hold on to the democracy we craved? Alexander Yakovlev, the noted historian and architect of *perestroika*, believes it would be most useful for Russia's new authorities to analyze the lessons of February 1917

In late 1917 the man with the gun thought he was marching straight to communism

Alexander Yakovlev

The tercentenary of the Romanov dynasty was celebrated five years before the events of February 1917 and though the empire had been thought rock firm it collapsed virtually overnight soon after.

Bewildered contemporaries could not really grasp what had happened. However, that sweet enchanting word of "freedom" obscured all else, whether the incredibility of what had taken place, the horrifying drastic turn of the tide, or the fear of the future.

From the angle of history as such the February 1917 revolution was a spectacular highlight. I would say that nothing in modern Russian history could have so drastically altered life for the millions.

Every historical truth always has its host of opponents, misconstruers, ill-wishers, even the envious. The truth does not suit the books of many. For many it may be undesirable, while for others it merely serves as a means of self-assertion. That was valid for the February revolution and that is valid for the changes that have been occurring over the past few years.

In official historiography, the October 1917 coup soon superseded the February revolution. That is understandable in principle, as these two events were, in effect, antipodal. October cast out February. The Bolshevik dictatorship rode roughshod over the movement for democracy.

No sympathy

It stands to reason that the February revolution did not take place all at once. The system was disintegrating in torment. The new capitalist relationships were emerging in a semi-feudal land. The nobility had lost its dynamic qualities and was on the wane. The go-getting industrialists demonstrated ruthless avarice. Stolypin's attempts to reset the vector were not consummated. For that matter the man himself was out of joint with the times, with leftists regarding him as reactionary, and the powers-that-were, as a leftist. He was assassinated like his reformer predecessor Alexander II.

Russia herself was humiliated by the defeat sustained in the war with Japan and by the debacles in the First World War. The top echelon of power was completely corrupted and debased by Rasputin. Autocracy feared everyone and dilly-dallied.

All expected a storm to break and it came.

The impotent government collapsed at the very first blow. Recalling the February events royalist Vasily Shulgin bitterly observed: "The trouble was that in this sprawling metropolis we could not find a few hundred people sympathetic towards the authorities."

Thus, popular rebellion spread throughout the capital reaping the fruit of the matured revolution and sweeping away the old authority.

So began the first act in the drama of revolution. The men seeking to lead the masses were still not ready, as is often the case, to really lead. Nor did they comprehend the entire profundity of what was taking place, and still worse, did not believe victory could be won.

Revolutionaries not ready

For the intelligentsia and the moderate democrats the revolution came as a complete surprise. They had dreamed only of a revolution that would shake the pillars of tsarism and lead to a constitutional monarchy and had hoped the democratic liberties at the expense of restrictions imposed on the power of the tsar, but had not expected the complete collapse of autocracy. For most political parties the very slogan of "Down with autocracy!" was no more than a slogan, not a feasible task of the moment.

Meanwhile, the émigré political leaders had least of all expected such a revolution, which had come as a bolt from the blew even for radical extremists.

Indeed, when Lenin read the newspaper report about this victorious revolution, he wondered whether the information was really true.

Even the politicians in Petrograd, who themselves witnessed the tempest, thought this nothing more than a flash in the pan.

In the capital and throughout the country representatives of left-wing parties and groups met time and again to discuss the kaleidoscopic alteration of events. Holding forth about revolution at these meetings, some thought it would come only in thirty years' time, others still later, in some fifty years' time.

Liberal bourgeois democratic parliamentarians did not dare to capitalize on the situation to secure radical political reforms. Even less were they inclined to take power. This political shilly-shallying, this wait-and-see policy continued until it grew clear that the tsar and his regime would fail to quell the uprising by using the troops deployed in the capital.

It would not be fair to expect democratic parties to have had cut-and-dried programmes for an unexpected revolution. However, it would be quite logical to reproach them that both during and after the revolution they had failed to draft an action programme for the concretely obtaining situation.

Apparently this helplessness fertilized the medium for a dictatorship and paved the way for the usurpation of power by the generals or one or another political group. It was increasingly believed that run-away anarchy would inevitably follow unless a dictatorship was established.

Both leftist and rightist extremists worked chiefly to capitalize on popular resentment and democracy's disorganization so as seize power and instal an authoritarian regime at shortest order.

Flogged for exorbitant prices

The rallying cries of the February revolution called for the overthrow of autocracy, withdrawal from the war, a solution to the agrarian question, political freedoms, a democratic society and a better economic situation for the masses.

Some two years ago I observed that in a certain sense *perestroika* needed to cope with those self-same tasks which the February 1917 revolution had not managed to accomplish. However, to this day a land reform is progressing but tardily, clearly lagging behind events, democratic structures and freedoms are still at the crossways, while the economic plight of the masses has sunk to an extreme low. Such is the price for artificially impeding the natural process of history.

True, *perestroika* did managed to depose Bolshevik autocracy, in the main, withdraw from the permanent war against its own people and the war against the Afghan people, and from continuing nuclear confrontation with the entire world.

However, the decisive issue was, as it still is today the economic issue incorporating food supplies, the organization of industry and transport and solution for the question of land and agrarian relationships.

The tsarist government was unable to detect the roots of the economic difficulties and how these difficulties should be surmounted. It strove to cope with all troubles by administrative measures. The poet Alexander Blok observed that with the tsarist authority the entire "spirit of struggle" reduced exclusively to the "erection of barriers." More often than not this resembled

The Soviet state was born in the travail of war and disintegrates to the accompaniment of gunfire

Photo by Nikolai Galki

the measures to which the Tashkent governor general resorted, when appearing once a week in the market places and having traders, whom he believed demanding above "normal" prices, flogged.

However, the bourgeois radicals and socialists, who had come to power, though having so acutely and convincingly censured the tsarist government before for economic ruination and run-away prices were themselves no whit more efficient than the old regime; on the contrary, they plunged the country into complete chaos, with inflation reaching unprecedented proportions, with enterprises halted by lack of raw materials and fuel, with the chaotic transport network threatening to bring all of economic life to a standstill, with the powers-that-were openly stealing right and left, and with crime on the up and up.

The situation was going from bad to worse. The government demonstrated an impermissible vacillation and indecisiveness as concerned measures to stabilize the situation. It goes without saying that the economic difficulties did not appear only in February 1917, but were rooted in past history; however, public opinion attributed these difficulties to mismanagement by the new authorities.

Tormenting issue

One of the revolution's main demands was for a democratic peace.

However, the generals and the industrialists were loth to let slip the likely advantages a victor country could secure. It was thought that a triumphant end to the war would solve many political and economic problems. These social strata, like the Provisional government itself ignored the obvious fact that Russia had overstretched herself in the war effort.

Russia's peasantry hoped the revolution would speedily resolve their problems, but instead of getting land, they were fobbed off with vague promises of a coming agrarian reform. Tired of waiting the peasantry rebelled over all of Russia in the autumn of 1917, seizing landed estates wholesale, and thus provoking the first rumblings of Civil War.

The revolution's leaders failed to grasp the entire complexity and profundity of the peasant question in Russia. Nor is it properly understood even today, which thus very tangibly menaces the democratic process.

Nor were Russia's numerous ethnic units gratified. The revolution imparted a powerful impetus to the national movement.

It must be said that the Provisional government did much to plant and consolidate democratic orders in Russia, to democratize the country. Thus, it published a political amnesty, proclaimed political freedom and full religious tolerance, and took steps to institute an eight-hour work day. The freedoms of speech and assembly were fully realized. In the months that followed the 1917 February revolution, Russia witnessed an unprecedentedly rapid growth in the trade-union movement.

Why, then, so shortly afterwards, already in the autumn of 1917, was the democracy that the February revolution brought into being, swept away? This is doubtlessly the most tormenting issue of a in Russian history.

Millions of speakers

The endless rallies, meetings and discus sions were seen as a basic expression democracy. A rally or meeting was called b everyone on the most diverse themes. No and again the Soviets would sit round th

Russia's locomotive, steaming full ahe

:lock with no preset agenda, simply to de-)ate all the burning issues of the moment. The American newspaperman Albert Rhys Williams observed that Russia had become ı country with millions of speakers.

These rallies and meetings developed nto a major implement for manipulating he mass mentality to serve narrow party in-erests, and became an effective means of :xerting pressure on the structures of the Provisional government. In the final ınalysis, this thus absorbed section of the)opulation largely set the tune for the shap-ng of policy.

Yet how greatly did these meetings and allies express mass sentiment? History has lemonstrated, and this was strikingly illus-rated by the February revolution, that whether revolution or counterrevolution,)oth are ultimately effected in the main by a)oliticized minority, provided the masses re for the most part passive or apathetic.

As Maxim Gorky noted in his *Untimely Thoughts*, the very technique of endless ral-ies and of simple slogans "understandable o the masses" served to vulgarize a mental-:y which was crude as it was.

No political party sought to foster within he masses a responsible attitude to what vas taking place in the country. Nobody ought to promote the mainstays of democ-acy, the art of compromise implying the bility to enter into a dialogue with oppo-ents, to listen to "dissidence," to count ith the interests of the other side. In short, nobody taught the masses to think. All they did was to teach them to hate.

Attribution of diabolical features to the opponent, and manipulation of the enemy image were characteristic of all political parties at the time. The democracy of the street was infected with the germs of self-decay and thus served to reinforce the ideology of intolerance.

Revolt instead of revolution

Little by little the revolution yielded to the typically Russian revolt, in which connection one needs but recall the massacre of officers by seamen in Kronstadt. The illusions to which the new authority had succumbed also took effect. The government failed to install new law-enforcement agencies in place of the disbanded police and gendarmerie. The country slowly slithered into the chaos of the complete absence of authority. The struggle against autocracy became a struggle against the people, the very destruction of the mainstays of the human community.

Far from consolidating the political centre, the February revolution, on the contrary, destroyed it, subverting the fundamentals of stability. Russia failed to produce a third force capable of resisting attempts at autocratic restoration or the simplistic policy of Bolshevik destruction.

This all generated favourable conditions for transmuting democracy into its opposite, into anarchy.

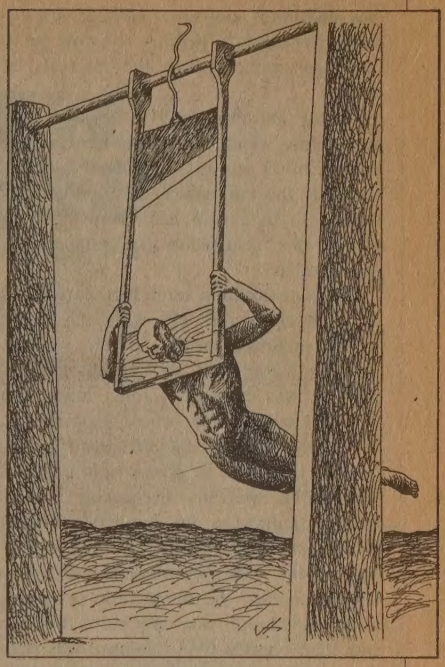
Society as a whole failed to show due responsibility for the destinies of the nation, for the proper use of the freedom won. It was greatly hampered by the scheming to achieve narrow party ideals. It did not try to work out a common denominator, a consensus. Other political parties and groups were not tolerated even if they were representative of one and the same political trend. Public mentality was dismembered, fragmented, the process stimulated by the multiplicity of political creations and the struggle between them.

Democratic forces failed to fuse into a pivot for rallying all of society's viable, healthy and rational forces. Belief that Russia could be free and happy through parliamentary democracy diminished.

At this juncture a group of resolute plotters had the edge over every party desirous of having a parliamentary democracy.

Who generated this atmosphere? And how?

At the head of the Provisional government were former oppositionists, people from different walks of life, scholars, lawyers, traders and industrialists. Many subscribed to socialist convictions and were Narodnik populists.



Drawing by Arkady Gursky

Yet at the helm of the state they soon grew into professional politicians swerving with every new day further and further away from that nutritive medium, from those forces who had lifted them up to the crest of the political wave. With every new day they paid increasingly less notice to the voice of the common folk, for whose sake they had supposedly taken up matters of state.

Reality was supplanted by far-fetched schemes, lifeless programmes, political manoeuvring and time serving. Eventually, democratic policy lost its consistency, with the powers-that-were succumbing to revolutionary demagogy, and thus arousing increasing discontent among one part of the population and causing the rest to succumb to apathy.

Death of parliamentarianism

The supreme significance of the February revolution likewise lies in that shift in government precluding the likelihood of an immediate Civil War with all its consequences. It opened up the tempting prospect of peaceful coordination by all forces in society. The dominant view was that the February revolution had been a revolution involving all classes and social strata.

However, that unanimity soon ended. Social consensus for the sake of coping with overall democratic tasks was not achieved.

communism, cannot feed its poor

The ambitions individual political leaders cherished assumed priority. Narrow party objectives came before the interests of society.

By the autumn of 1917 the sixes and sevens into which the centrist parties had fallen caused schisms, expressed in some cases by the emergence of opposed factions with their own leaderships, and in other cases by division into independent associations.

The said situation reinforced extremists on both right and left, which, in turn, further polarized society. Matters went to such an extent that an outright trial of strength was essayed in July, during the Kornilov insurrection, whose suppression, to which the Bolsheviks contributed, opened the gates to power before them. The matter was now exclusively one of time. Attempts to get democratic forces confer got nowhere, merely demonstrating, on the contrary, weakness and confusion amongst the democratic centrists.

The revolution was now more destructive than constructive. Violence was rife. Force appeared preferable, which is what the extremists counted upon by demolishing the beginnings of the democratic system and suppressing and discrediting the embryionic parliamentarianism.

Could developments have taken a different road? Lenin time and again suggested that revolution would install either a military dictatorship or a dictatorship of the proletariat.

It would not be devoid of interest to note that some bourgeois politicians agreed with Lenin believing that Russia's only way out of the crisis was via a dictatorship.

Yet even then developments could have taken a different road. Suffice it to recall that after the inauguration of the Second Congress of Soviets, a coalition government in which left-wing Mensheviks, left-wing Socialist Revolutionaries and Bolsheviks were to be represented was proposed. The Bolshevik Central Committee wavered. When Lenin realized that he was in the minority, he threatened that in collaboration with Trotsky he would appeal to the seamen, which would then show who would really win. The notion of a coalition was spurned.

Dictatorship – our eternal choice?

The Constituent Assembly could have formed the government. But the Bolsheviks wanted full plenitude of power for the Soviets in which they sought to command the majority including a majority in their steering bodies. This became feasible already in the autumn of 1917. However, the Bolsheviks preferred to seize Petrograd's vital installations by force and arrest the Provisional government, instead of biding a peaceful outcome. Incidentally, in October 1917 they to all practical intents had no other programme except the seizure of power.

Even then after the Soviets had secured full power, their Second Congress indicated in its Decree of October 26 (old style) or November 8 (new style) setting up the Council of People's Commissars that this body was a "provisional worker-peasant government" that would exercise power "pending the convocation of the Constituent Assembly."

Unfortunately, the new authority feared the Constituent Assembly. The last chance of democratic restructuring was lost.

February deposed autocracy. October preferred a dictatorship. Such was the end-all.

Though we have time and again initiated great things, we never consummated them. We never had enough patience to do so.

We deposed all the authorities we had over the last 1000 years. All that remains is to depose ourselves, with our unlimited intolerance of others and our compassionate tolerance for ourselves.

How we hate others for our own sloth, stupidity, and ignorance.

I believe we can overcome all privation provided we overcome ourselves.

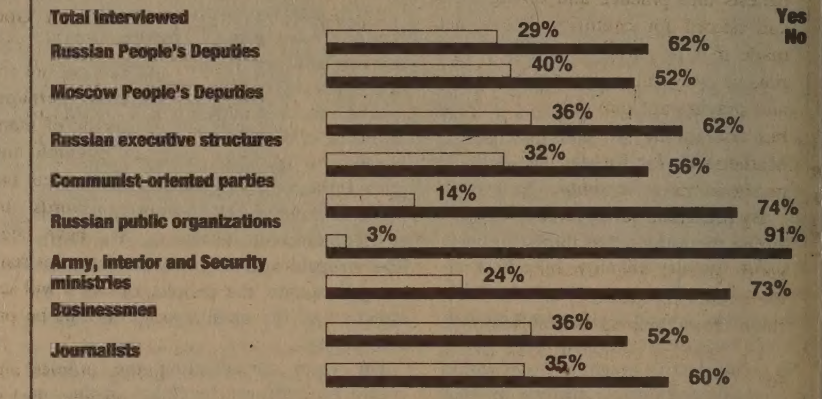
In those days after February 1917 we were not up to the mark.

SOCIOLOGICAL SURVEY

Prof. Boris Grushin's Vox Populi poll

No trust in ministers

Do you believe we shall see at least a partial economic improvement this autumn as the Russian government promised?



To sum up: most of the political, economic and cultural elite do not believe economic improvement will come soon. The proportion of optimists and pessimists in each group greatly varies. Naturally, the more active participants in the changes, implying the Russian and Moscow People's Deputies and businessmen view the future with somewhat greater enthusiasm, with the proportion of optimists almost balancing the proportion of pessimists. A sharply negative response is afforded by those traditional "champions of the people" from the Communist-oriented parties and Russian public organizations, with five times more pessimists and 30 times more pessimists among them respectively.

The divergence of views on so knotty a matter appears to be quite natural. However, the prevalent pessimistic response to economic reform within those power structures, upon whom its success largely depends is most perturbing.

(This information is based on telephone interviews in late last February of 613 leaders of public opinion).

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The last chief of the Big House

Leonid Mlechin

His colleagues in the Politbureau became presidents or peacefully retired. He alone ended up behind bars. What is the former First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia, Alfreds Rubiks, going to be charged with in Riga?

Alfreds Rubiks was arrested on the 25th of August. A police battalion surrounded the building of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia (CC CPL). The Deputy of the Supreme Soviet of Latvia, Odislejs Kostanda, went up together with the police to the floor where the Secretaries of the CC were sitting. The police felt strange about it: how could they arrest the First Secretary?

Rubiks somewhat arrogantly stood in the corridor, his hands in his pockets. Kostanda came up to him first. Rubiks said to him: "Introduce yourself, please!" Then to a policeman: "Don't scare me with your machine gun!" They lead him out to a minibus. The staff at the CC were taking home their personal belongings and tea sets. The First Secretary waved to those gathered around the entrance. Some woman threw flowers to him and shouted: "You didn't shoot enough of them!"

He betrayed his country. But which country?

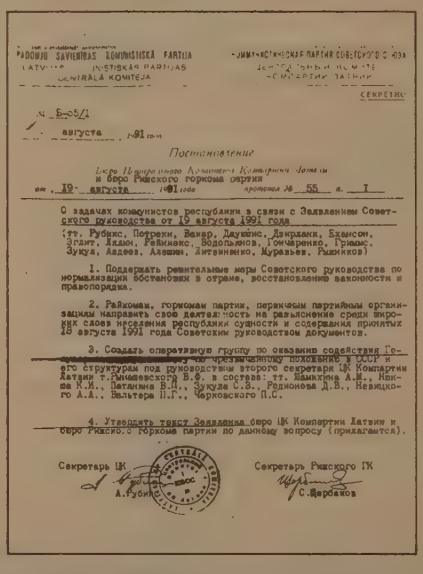
When the news from Moscow made it clear that the putsch had failed, on August 21, 1991, he was accused of attempting to overthrow the government in Latvia.

The 27th of August Rubiks was charged with high treason according to Article 59 of the Criminal Code of Latvia. He was already in prison then, but he took it calmly. On the lapel of his suitcoat shone the badge of a People's Deputy of the USSR. He counted on the Supreme Soviet of the USSR not consenting to his arrest.

Representatives of the USSR Supreme Soviet and the USSR Procurator's Office came to Riga, but only to disappoint Rubiks: Moscow would not intercede for him.

Rubiks didn't admit his guilt, and even the head of the investigation department for particularly important cases, Rita Aksenok, had a few awkward moments: Soviet Latvia no longer existed, and the article the former First Secretary was to be tried under was not part of the Criminal Code anymore.

Since August 22, an article went into effect envisaging punishment for attempts to overthrow the government of the Republic of Latvia. But after August 22 and up to the moment of his arrest, Alfreds Rubiks did nothing wrong. Was the law retroactive?



Постановление

Бюро Центрального Комитета Компартии Латвии
и бюро Рижского горкома партии
от 19 августа 1991 года протокол № 55 п. 1

О задачах коммунистов республики в связи с Заявлением Советского руководства от 19 августа 1991 года

(тт. Рубикс, Петрикс, Вандер, Даукшис, Дзидрманс, Екимсонс, Зуздит, Яхимс, Райнекс, Водопьянов, Гончаренко, Гришс, Зукуле, Авдеев, Алешин, Литвиненко, Журавьев, Родионов)

1. Поддержать решительные меры Советского руководства по нормализации обстановки в стране, восстановлению законности и правопорядка.

2. Райкомам, горкомам партии, первичным партийным организациям направить свою деятельность на разъяснение среди широких слоев населения республики сущности и содержания принятых 19 августа 1991 года Советским руководством документов.

3. Создать оперативную группу по оказанию содействия Государственному комитету по чрезвычайному положению в СССР и его структурам под руководством второго секретаря ЦК Компартии Латвии т.Минаевского В.Ф. в составе: тт. Ешкинова А.К., Новикова К.И., Петанина В.П., Зукуле С.Б., Родионова Д.Б., Невяцкого А.А., Вальтера П.Г., Черковского П.С.

4. Утвердить текст Заявления бюро ЦК Компартии Латвии и бюро Рижского горкома партии по данному вопросу (прилагается).

Секретарь ЦК А.Рубикс

Секретарь Рижского ГК С.Черканов

At a joint meeting of the CPL Central Committee bureau and Riga City Party Committee a decision was taken to support the August 1991 putsch in Moscow

This didn't confuse the Procurator's Office. The ball had started rolling: along with the August events they began to investigate the January events, the actions of the riot police, and the series of mysterious explosions in Riga after the declaration of the independence of Latvia was made public.

The 20th of February, almost a half year since Rubiks' arrest, the General Procurator, Janis Skrastiņš, said that "in the course of the investigation evidence was found to bring new charges. That evidence was the material of the plenum of the CC CPL which took place on January 13, 1991. The material made it clear that already then there was talk of seizing power by force."

Half a year of intensive investigation didn't result in the arrest of any other suspect. Rubiks' former assistant, Police Lt. Col. Vladimir Serdyukov, who had been arrested together with his chief, was released. The charges against him weren't withdrawn, and he is not to leave his place of residence, but that he was let out of prison says a lot.

It seems that only Rubiks will be tried in Riga. He is being blamed for everything

that happened in Latvia from April 1990 to August 1991.

Why is it Rubiks who has to pay for everything? Are his opponents really right in calling him a fiend?

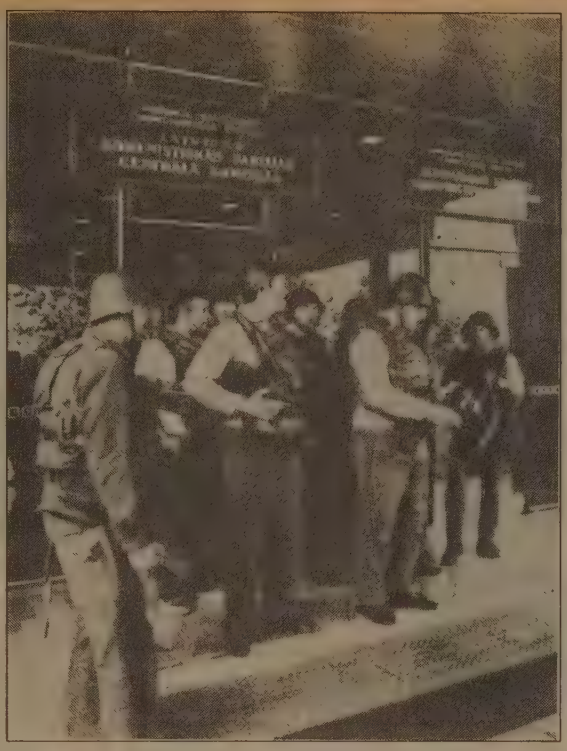
He could have fled the country. But he remained

The 19th of August the happy officials were celebrating a joyous event in the building of the CC CPL: hip-hip hooray, Gorbachev has been overthrown!

The First Secretary of the CC CPL and Chairman of the All-Latvian Committee for Public Salvation, Alfreds Rubiks, decided that now he was the head man in Latvia. First he went to the Commander of the Baltic Military District, General Fyodor Kuzmin to find out the news, but the general didn't know any more than all the rest. Then he held a press conference. At a meeting with the secretaries of the district Party committees he noted that soon the local Soviets would have to be reformed and new personnel should be selected. He gathered the Party staff members and warned that all must be ready for action. In each department people were detailed for night duty and cots were hauled out.

Rubiks waited for instructions from Moscow. Not getting any, he finally went himself. But everyone was busy. He called Lukyanov but wasn't received. He managed to see Oleg Shenin, a member of the State of Emergency Committee and Secretary of the CC, for a few minutes. But Shenin already understood that all would soon be over. Rubiks went back to Riga. He held a bureau meeting and a plenum, but no one was doing anything in the CC already. They were busy destroying secret documents. Wednesday, August 21, they took the video cameras, computers, and the radio transmitter out of the building after lunch. In the evening they began to drink. Even the First Secretary's chief bodyguard got drunk.

Rubiks could have fled like his Lithuanian colleague, Mikolas Burokevičius. No one in Moscow would have touched him as he was a People's Deputy. But he remained. Probably his pride didn't let him. And no matter what they have said about him, he was not a cunning cynic. Friday afternoon he parted with his subordinates, saying that he would wait to be arrested. And added: if I am tried, it'll be a repeat of the Dimitrov trial.



On August 23, Rubiks' residence was blockaded by the troops loyal to the government of Latvia. The CPL Central Committee's headquarters ceased to be the embodiment of power

Dreams fulfilled

The name Rubiks became known outside the republic in the spring of 1990. The Latvians, Lithuanians and Estonians parted with the CPSU without any regrets. The Communist parties in the Baltics had broken up. Those who left them got nothing. All the property – money, buildings, papers – remained with those who were against their republic becoming independent. For the most part they were not Latvians, Lithuanians or Estonians, and that was to be disguised. Only representative of the native population remaining true to Moscow were chosen as first secretaries.

In Latvia the choice was wider than in Estonia or Lithuania where the little-known and old Mikolas Burokevičius had been put at the head of the Communsit Party. The Latvian Communsits always felt closer to Russia. Even before the last congress of the CPL in April 1990 it was decided to remove the First Secretary Janis Vagris, who was soft and inclined to compromise, from office and replace him with Alfreds Rubiks.

He had been the mayor of Riga for six years. On the eve of the CPL congress the City Soviet had been re-elected and he found himself without a job. This circumstance evidently affected him greatly. At the congress Rubiks was very aggressive – it puzzled his relatives. His sisters quit the Party right after the congress.

Rubiks had been a Party official for a long time, but never high up. His highest post had been the secretary of a district Party committee. For a while he had been the Minister of Local Industry, then the Chairman of the Riga City Executive Committee. But he was only the formal chief of the city – for foreigners. He knew that all current matters were decided at the City Party Committee, and the major decisions made in the big glass and concrete house of the CPL Central Committee.

In the spring of 1990, the CPL Central Committee's power began to melt, but Rubiks thought the reason was the weakness or even treachery on the part of the Party elite. He believed that he would be able to reverse the course of events. Assuming the highest Party office seemed to Rubiks the ultimate realization of his dreams.

"I'm a Polish Catholic!"

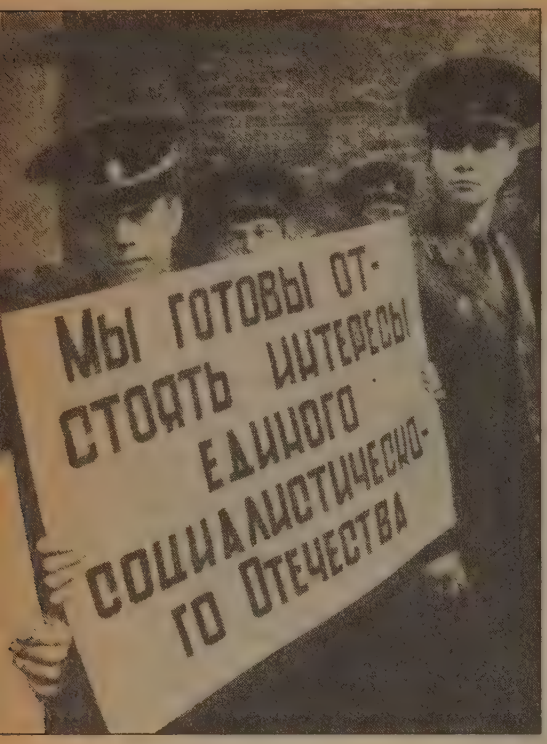
In last years Rubiks' family didn't get together often. Each New Year's Eve all used to go to the mother's in Aizkraukle and stopped at the church to drink champagne. They celebrated birthdays and congratulated each other, but had less and less fun.

Irene Gringauzene, Rubiks' sister, said in an interview with the paper *Neatkariga cina* (it was translated into Russian and sent to the editors of *New Times* by a long-time subscriber, Ivars Rozenbergs):

"Fredis was busy and didn't even call his mother very often, but she kept waiting for him to. When my sister or I called Mama she would say disappointedly 'Oh, it's you...' But it was not just a matter of Fredis being so busy. I was even afraid to have much to do with him. Our stepfather was called up to serve in the German army at the end of the war. I married a Jew. It seems to me that our brother couldn't accept these things. There's nothing unusual about that. Not long ago they used to scrupulously dig out the facts about all one's relatives. This would affect your career and sometimes your whole life."

And Alfreds' own marriage didn't go over well with the family. He married a girl from Krasnodar who was visiting Riga. At home they only spoke Russian. His parents wouldn't understand that.

The last First Secretary was born into a family whose history reflected all the



The Communist Party's strength lay in the fact that despite all existing laws the army and riot police were under its control. The would-be leaders of the putsh, in particular the former head of the CC CPL Boris Pugo took care of this

cataclisms taking place in Latvia this century.

His father, Peteris Rubiks, was a corporal in the former Latvian army. He was stationed in Daugavpils. Alfreds was born there in a military hospital in 1935. His mother, Vilhelmine, was Polish. At home they spoke only Polish, and with others Latvian. The marriage didn't last. Peteris wasn't very serious, was temperamental and loved to drink. Often the little boy, seeing that it was already late and his father wasn't home yet, said to his mother: "Let's go to grandma's. Father will come home drunk again and start a fight."

Peteris Rubiks left the army and got a job working for the railroad. But he continued to drink and began to cheat on his wife. It all ended in a divorce. When the war began Peteris was drafted into the Red Army. He was soon killed. Afterwards Vilhelmine's brother told her that he had seen Peteris' grave.

The head of the railroad station, Evalds Erglis married Vilhelmine who had two children. In 1944, she had a daughter by him and that same year the Germans called him up and Erglis served in the Latvian SS legion. He survived and returned home. He worked, but became reticent. Erglis wasn't forgiven for serving Hitler.

At the end of the war the Rubiks were starving. Alfreds was even put in a hospital to keep him from dying of malnutrition. After the war they lived in poverty though they worked hard. The Erglises reproached Vilhelmine with her children from her first marriage and called her Russian. She got very offended: "I'm no Russian. I'm a Polish Catholic!"

Alfreds Rubiks was a good student and took part in civic activities. He didn't have any friends, his father forbade him to bring any home.

The young Rubiks always wanted to stand out, to look good, to escape poverty, hard work and the severe discipline at home.

He was always very accurate and never lost this quality. The last to note this quality was the investigator who told the correspondents that Rubiks was keeping in shape and that his cell was always neat, while others in his situation went to pot.

His mother remembers that as a kid Rubiks was clean and neat even though he wore hand-me-downs. "I remember at school there was going to be a ceremony and he was to be presented the challenge banner. But his jacket was threadbare, and his pants were so worn they shone. There was no money to buy new clothes though. 'How will you go, son?' He answered half in joke: 'I'll try not to let them see me from behind so they won't notice the holes...' When I remember that I cry."

He does whatever he's told

There was only a seven-year school in Aizkraukle. That was as far as Alfreds' education would have gone. But the director of the state farm told the mother: "Send the boy to Riga. If you had an education you wouldn't be slaving away on a farm, but sitting in an office."

They sent Alfreds to the city where he entered a technical school. He was an average student. Sometimes he got Cs and lost his scholarship. He lived in a small room together with his uncle and his family. At night he slept on the floor.

In the summer he worked with his family on the farm. His mother insisted on this.

Though she was sociable and fun-loving, she was strict with her children. They knew what it was like to stand in a corner and the feel of birch. The children were not allowed to fool about. She wasn't so strict with the girls, but the first son was not spared in the least.

The stepfather had Alfreds do the hardest work: break up stones and keep the roads in order. Rubiks wasn't afraid of working then, nor later when he first became a minister and then a mayor. The foreman liked the young Rubiks and was always asking Vilhelmine Erglite: "Will your son work today? He's a fine lad. He does whatever he's told. And you don't have to keep an eye on him."

And these good qualities of Rubiks stayed with him. When he was put on the Central Committee, its staff members used to the unhurried bureaucratic life felt as if they had landed on a volcano. In the days of the August 1991 putsch he managed to do as much as all his assistants taken together.

He made his choice in the army when he saw that the way to become somebody was through the Komsomol and the Party. He only became a Komsomol member in the army – at home he had been borbidden to. When he returned home he explained that the red card was mandatory in the army but his father didn't believe him. Alfreds had changed a lot. He had become a completely different person.

He didn't get along with his stepfather anymore. Alfreds understood that he would pay dearly for Evalds' past. And Evalds, in his turn, couldn't forgive his son for giving in to the Communists. Sometimes he even refused to sit down with him at the dinner table. He took his plate and went to eat in the garden.

Rubiks' student years were not easy. He

worked in the daytime, attended classes at a polytechnical institute in the evenings and earned extra money at night as a docker. Sometimes he slept at the port under a overturned boat. At the institute he was elected full-time secretary of the Komomol's committee – the classic beginning of a successful career.

Alfreds Rubiks climbed the steps fast and confidently. He liked to order others around, and as his sisters noticed, was willingly obeyed. When their brother came home from the army with sergeant's stripes, he began to teach his sisters to march – from the cattle shed home.

"I promised Boris Karlovich"

Rubiks came into his own as the Chairman of the Riga City Executive Committee. He had ambitious plans which included building a subway, something the Popular Front would eventually oppose. The vain Rubiks asserted that he was more popular in Riga than Raimonds Pauls.

There sprung up new neighbourhoods in Riga. Newcomers who had been invited to work at building sites, plants and factories settled in them. The native inhabitants of Riga – the Latvians – felt that Rubiks, following instructions from Moscow, was turning the capital of Latvia into a Russian city.

Rubiks was neither lazy nor incompetent. He mastered the style of the typical Soviet leader: all documents had to have his approval, he held meetings that lasted for hours, reproached his subordinates and was very strict with them. If he heard that they were drinking coffee in some office (not alcohol!) he considered it criminal slovenliness.

But unlike many Soviet officials Rubiks wasn't a grasper. When he became the Chairman of the City Executive Committee, his sister called him... "I have a favour to ask..." He interrupted her: "Only don't ask for an apartment."

Appearing on TV he loved to repeat: "I don't have a car or a dacha." That's true because he had the use of a two-story government dacha by the sea and an office car. And he understood the value of his place in the *nomenklatura* which guaranteed him both of those things. When he was fighting for his position as Chairman of the City Executive Committee his mother said to him: "Quit the post. The sky won't fall if you lose that job." Rubiks got mad and left. In his world a man without a position was nobody.

Rubiks quickly learned little tricks to please the chiefs. His assistant on the Executive Committee later told correspondents how against the city regulations, they took off pretty stone pavement and asphalted the street where high-ranking brass and hats of the Baltic Military District settled: the generals did not like noise. Another street which served as a thoroughfare for the CC secretaries remained without sanitation because to lay tubes it had to be dug up and closed. Rubiks was told that it wasn't pleasant for the people to live that way, but he cut short his subordinates: "Do as told – I promised Boris Karlovich." Boris Karlovich Pugo was the First Secretary of the Central Committee in Latvia then.

In the spring of 1990 the Communist Party of Latvia was overwhelmingly defeated in the elections to the Supreme Soviet. The First Secretary said: "We don't intend to slip down to the position of a so-called parliamentary opposition" and headed the fight with those who he truly considered enemies of Soviet Latvia. Various people united around him: those who were afraid for their children or were not psychologically or otherwise prepared for the republic to separate from Russia or the Ukraine by the state border, and those who had been privileged in the former government and didn't have a place in a free Latvia. They used communist terminology but really wished to preserve a one and indivisible empire.

Fighting for an idea

The friendship of Rubiks with these people was, most likely, his tragedy. He was sure that he was fighting for an idea, both when he ordered to have the benches next the Freedom Monument removed so people wouldn't gather there, and when he took under his wing the Riga riot police which the Procurator's Office in Latvia thinks is guilty of many crimes.

His party used the strategy of building up tension: to provoke a crisis and blood spilling in order to have a reason for applying military force and removing from power the Supreme Soviet and present government.

In April 1991, after the congress of the CPL, a correspondent of a youth paper in Latvia asked Rubiks:

"Would you support Gorbachev if he decided to impose presidential rule in Latvia?"

"Maybe we ourselves will ask him to do so," answered the First Secretary.

No one paid any attention to his words then. But what seemed unthinkable to the correspondent and many people in Latvia, sounded better and better to those on the Old Square (the former CC CPSU headquarters. – **Ed.**) in Moscow and in the Big House in Riga.

The membership in the CPL was dropping drastically, and Rubiks adopted new Party Rules allowing 16-year-olds to join the party even without the term of probation. But the hopes in the CC CPSU and the CC CPL that the forces loyal to the idea of a single Union could win power back in the republic melted away.

On December 6, 1990, the members of the Presidium of the All-Latvian Committee for Public Salvation headed by Rubiks signed a petition to President Gorbachev requesting to impose presidential rule in Latvia.

That was a committee similar to the one which in January 1991 tried to overthrow the legal government of Lithuania. It was a mythical superstructure which was to mask the Communist Party. And the document sent from Riga to Moscow was like two drops of water similar to the message of the Secretaries of the Communsit Party of Lithuania: the human rights are not being observed, there is a growing threat of anarchy, illegal armed units are being formed...

A political prisoner?

On January 13, 1991, it was decided at the plenum of the CC CPL that the Salvation Committee must take over in Latvia. But this decision was not carried out because Gorbachev didn't sanction the use of force and the advocates of the "one and indivisible" state decided to act independently only in August.

On December 1, 1990, during an interview with the paper *Neatkariga cina* Rubiks said: "If the majority of inhabitants of Latvia vote to break with the USSR, there's no going against the will of the people, and then perhaps we'll have to leave the political arena."

If Rubiks had understood that this moment had arrived the 4th of March, 1991, when the Popular Front which promised freedom from Russia won at the general elections, then Latvia would have avoided the spilling of blood and Rubiks wouldn't have landed in prison.

True, even now he is sure he is right. His last birthday he spent in his prison cell. He was brought telegrams congratulating him, says the investigator, and he lit up: the people needed him! So it isn't necessary to break out of prison, but to fight from there as a political prisoner should.

But the Latvian Procurator's Office intends to try him in court not as propagandist for an integral Union, but as the leader of the CC of the Communist Party of Latvia which prepared to overthrow the legal government in the republic by armed force and used the riot police and other special units which went on pogroms in Riga, set off explosives, seized buildings, attacked customs posts and killed policemen...

His pride and stubbornness, inability to acknowledge his own mistakes and reject false ideas and the painful desire to bury the past – traits in his character noted by his relatives – keep Rubiks from understanding all this.

Photos from the newspaper Saime (Latvia)

Carry on, Slavs!

Alexei Kiva

In a public opinion survey held in St.Petersburg 39 percent of respondents admitted having assumed a negative attitude towards communists and... Ukraine. More than once have my Ukrainian friends told me that the Russian media creates an "enemy image" of Ukraine.

They answer my question about the Ukrainian reaction to the anti-Ukrainian propaganda by saying that it was bitter and painful – the complex of a colonial people – and that now anti-Russian sentiments have appeared. Unlike Russia where anti-Ukrainian sentiments have permeated the intelligentsia and the official press, the anti-Russian sentiments have not yet reached beyond marginal social forces and the marginal press. On the other hand, the independent media are still unevolved in Ukraine.

The Crimea in exchange for the Kuban

What are the reasons for these dangerous tendencies? Primarily, hurt feelings, like during a divorce, when the wife offended by her husband's departure doesn't allow him to take some of their common property, and Moscow begins to make territorial claims to Kiev: give the Crimea back to us! But the smart guys in Kiev immediately remind Moscow about the Kuban and regions like Kursk and Voronezh which were joined to Russia.

The splitting up of the legacy after the putsch didn't assume highly civilized forms. As we all remember, the struggle for dinastic succession not infrequently resulted in long and fierce wars. Russia has emerged as the successor to the disintegrated USSR. It has inherited the USSR's seat on the Security Council and in the Nuclear Club, and it is ready, for the sake of the right to inherit the "imperial legacy," even to assume, on certain conditions, the responsibility for others' debts. Whose is the Fleet? Of course, Russia's – in Moscow's logic. Whose is the Army? Moscow would like it to be unitary and under Russian command; true, for the time being, under the CIS flag.

Kiev follows a different logic: since the unitary state personified by the USSR has collapsed, why should the Army remain unitary and indivisible under Moscow's exclusive leadership? The Ukrainian contribution to the building of the armed forces is very large, as well as to the creation of the "Union" industrial potential, including that which lies on the Russian territory. Above all, it isn't safe to give up all to Russia.

What if Ukraine starts to seek other powerful countries' protection against Russia?

Suppose, Kiev trusts Boris Yeltsin, but not many prominent Russian politicians and the Russian Parliament which has legalized Moscow's territorial claims to Kiev. In Kiev they no longer believe in the Moscow press's impartiality.

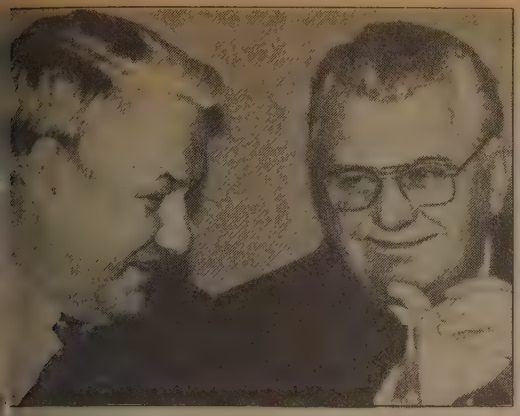
What may be the turn of events if national patriots succeed democrats in the Kremlin? Couldn't the year 1920 repeat once again, the year Ukraine lost its national independence it had just acquired for the first time in so many centuries?

The explosively developing national self-awareness prompts Kiev to look for reliable guarantees that the tragedy won't occur one more time, but Moscow believes that Kravchuk stirs up trouble.

Ukraine's membership in the USSR was a real tragedy: during the artificially created famine of 1933 a fourth to third of its population died. The most efficient section of the peasantry was eliminated. The Ukrainian intelligentsia was liquidated a number of times. The results of the Bolshevik domination in Ukraine are best illustrated by the fact that in the regions where the genocide was especially severe the percentage of mediocre to poor students is catastrophically high, which, incidentally, equally applies to Russia's regions with the same past.

The double standards used by the Russian authorities stir up irritation among the Ukrainians. For instance, if Moscow follows so strictly the principle of the right of nations to self-determination with regard to the Crimea, then why is it so intolerant and histerical when the same principle is followed in Tatarstan or in Chechen?

Moscow is said to make use of Russian-Ukrainian relations to achieve internal political tasks at times. In order to counteract national-patriotic pressure, Russian ruling Democrats are prepared to aggravate relations with Ukraine by putting forward territorial claims to it. I'm afriad this is not a case when



Passions are running high in Kiev and Sevastopol. Yeltsin and Kravchuk seem to understand each other much better
Photo by ITAR–TASS and from Der Spiegel (Germany)

political games of the sort are permissible. To win in tactics in order to lose in strategy?

Who eats Ukraine-produced meat?

In Russia many believe that the Ukrainian people had no ambitions about independence and that the whole jumble was started by the Leonid Kravchuk-headed partocracy for the sake of retaining power.

However, it is erroneous to think that the Ukrainians have never dreamed about their country's independence. During the Khrushchev "thaw" I happened to hear talks to this effect more than once, and not in Ukraine's western, but in its eastern part, whose destiny seemed to merge with Russia's for ever.

The Ukrainians were deeply hurt by their Moscow-backed stupid leaders ruining the richest republic. I remember how reproofs were showered on me as a Muscovite – as if anything depended on me! – for the Ukrainian milk and meat products being shipped not even to Moscow or Leningrad, but to Vietnam, Cuba, Angola and Mozambique while the Ukrainians themselves had to go to Moscow to buy sausages, butter and cheese...

Therefore, as soon as after the August putsch the real hope for independence took shape, the idea of independence began to spread among the population and captivated the hearts of the overwhelming majority of the Ukrainians, including those of Russian, Jewish and other origins, which was demonstrated by the December 1991 referendum. Something of the kind took place in other regions too, Lithuania included. In spite of the Centre's opposition and the Interfront's propaganda, a considerable part of Russian-speaking population favoured full state independence.

Leonid Kravchuk – whose merits should not be underestimated – was subtle enough to perceive it and acted very skilfully.

A lot of shallow, rude and obviously foolish criticism of Kravchuk's policy is heard in Russia. Yes, he is arrogantly energetic, even pushy, as some say. Yet he was able to influence political life in Ukraine in such a way that it looks much more civilized there than in Russia. In Russia, one can't understand who is the ruling block and who is the opposition. Apart from the extreme right-wingers and the extreme left-wingers, opposed to president Yeltsin are many democrats from Democratic Russia, Democratic Reforms Movement, and Alexander Rutskoi's party. The Vice-President is at loggerheads with the President, the Speaker of the Parliament with both at the same time and with the Russian government.

In Ukraine, there is also the ruling majority and the opposition personified by the Rukh. The opposition is productive – it supports the President's main political line, the strengthening of independence and the implementation of reforms. In fact, there are two trends in Rukh – one of them believes that it is necessary to put aside all differences temporarily and unite around the President for a period of national and state consolidation. The other (headed by Chornovil) doesn't agree, maintaining reasonably that without a strong opposition the state power may degenerate into a hardline authoritarian regime.

Thank God, there has been no national enmity in Ukraine so far. There is no Russian anti-Semitism which especially Moscow and St.Petersburg have recently become so famous for. There is no Slavofile rubbish about the country's "specificity" and "inimitability," no attempts to oppose it to the entire civilized world, no talks about a mythical, specifically Slavonic messianic spirituality which, in its time, served as furtile soil for Bolshevism and which eventually ruined our country. Nowadays all this stuff feeds the "brown-red" (fascist-bolshevik) danger.

Ukraine is made up of Eastern Ukraine and Western Ukraine, it includes the Crimea and the Transcarpathia, as well as Odessa and other regions of the so-called Novorossia (New Russia), and the Donetsk Coalfield region. The ethnic composition, history, cultural traditions and even religion is not quite the same there. Vyacheslav Chornovil believes that this diversity, often, in his opinion, exaggerated, has never challenged and must not challenge political stability in Ukraine.

However, problems exist, of course, and they may seriously aggravate the near future, not so much because of "an interference from outside" (which is not altogether ruled out either), as for purely subjective reasons, for instance, as a result of an upsurge of national self-awareness which is an inevitable consequence of

the building of national statehood (even considering the fact that, in my opinion, Ukraine is a Ukrainian-Russian state), as well as because of lumpenization of a considerable part of population, possibly, caused by serious blunders in economic policy.

And in addition, we tend to forget that the same historical facts and circumstances can be differently perceived by the Ukrainian and the Russian national consciousness, for instance, the historical roles played by Peter the Great, Catherine II or Mazepa.

However, all these problems can be solved, especially if both Kiev and Moscow prove wise enough.

Drawing by Alexander Zudin

The imperial nation destroying the empire

The disintegration of the imperial Union answers Russia's and Ukraine's national interests. What would have been if Mikhail Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin, Leonid Kravchuk and many other politicians – every one of them, naturally, in his own way, – some deliberately and others involuntarily – hadn't eventually destroyed the USSR? Being defeated in the cold war and living through a period of the most serious crisis of the system, the "Red Empire" was ready to resort to extreme measures.

The crash of empires was usually accompanied by bloody wars and sharp aggravation of ethnic and religious conflicts. Then why is the disintegration of the "Red Empire" taking place in a comparatively peaceful way? The reason is that usually the empire's central country, the imperial nation tries to prevent it from disintegrating. In our case, this function was fulfilled by the militarist-bureaucratic superstructure personified by the elite of the CPSU, the Army, the military-industrial complex, the KGB and the Ministry of the Interior. This structure was partly destroyed and considerably compromised in the course of the August putsch.

As concerns the imperial nation, it can hardly be called so in the word's proper sense. Certainly, the empire was created, leaning primarily on the Russian people, but the latter was subjected to a no lesser, if not greater, exploitation than other peoples. Besides, struggling for the destruction of the central power, Boris Yeltsin unambiguously dissociated Russia and the Russian people from the imperial policy of Tsarist and the "Red" empires.

A unique historical situation: "the imperial nation" emerged as the initiator of the empire's disintegration. I think that in this sense Russian-Ukrainian relations were fortunate enough. The initiation of the destruction of the empire passed from Boris Yeltsin to Leonid Kravchuk. Precisely these two leaders have played the decisive rôle in leading the political process in the former USSR from a dangerous deadlock.

Whereas Yeltsin was the initiator of consolidation of Russia's sovereignty, which actually predetermined the empire's disintegration, Kravchuk was the first of the CIS leaders to find a solution to the problem of the army. What is the sense of preserving a many million strong unitary army in the conditions of the absense of a unitary state? It is either nonsense or a subterfuge designed to urge the army to create a state which would maintain it.

Who fears whom, and most?

Russia and Ukraine just can't afford the luxury of spoiling relations with each other – they are too closely interdependent, not to mention other circumstances. Instability in one of the countries will inevitably affect the situation in the other. I am convinced that the existent borders are better left as they are. Hardly had Russia laid claims to the Crimea as territorial claims to Russia began to be put forward by a number of states, even outside the CIS, Moscow itself gave rise to speculations about states' borders of a 100 or a 300-500 years ago.

Just imagine what would take place if Ukraine, for fear of Russia – and some observers already assert that the only real threat to its soveriegnty can proceed from Russia – starts to seek support frow other powerful countries. First, Russia would thereby be weakened as a great power. Second, this could lead to a change in the world geopolitical situation, to a sharp change in the established balance of forces and, possibly, to a grave breach of global stability.

All talks about the possibility of an armed conflict between Russia and Ukraine are, in my opinion, to be regarded as provocative and designed to serve the interests of reactionary forces in both states.

Whatever Moscow's or Kiev's attitude towards the CIS (it is believed that Kiev is inclined to regard the Commonwealth as a "liquidation committee" on the path of civilized departure from the Union), none of the CIS member states can do without it. Well, they can, but at what price? And for the sake of what? I think there are too many illusions in this regard. I even believe there are more illusions in Kiev than in Moscow.

What prompts certain forces in Ukraine towards a cool attitude vis-à-vis the CIS? Not only illusions, wrong premises and exaggerated expectations of Western help or naive hopes for a quick integration in the European Community. They were urged by what in its time "pushed out" the Baltic states to the detriment of their economic interests – the fear of a new loss of independence. This fear is real and it must be removed.

If Russian democrats rose above the current political interests a bit and looked to the future, they would see that what Ukraine does today to strengthen its independence, albeit sometimes hastily and too straightforwardly, contributes, in the last analysis, to Russia's national interests too. But they would also see that not all Russian democrats do, primarily under the pressure of the rightists, the jingoist patriots, contribute to these interests. ■

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LIBYA

The Colonel is in trouble, as we are...

Retribution for the former policy: sanctions against Libya backfire on Russia

Dmitry Zgersky

The Qaddafi-promoted cult of violence in the name of "anti-imperialist revolution" backed with a tremendous amount of petrodollars has permeated dozens of the Third World countries.

The readiness to pull the trigger determined the Colonel's attitude towards both individuals and entire nations. Qaddafi once complained, addressing his compatriots, that they were not desperados like the Palestinians and he even threatened he would leave them to live in a bedouin tent in the desert.

The main object of his hatred, the United States of America, being too much for him to deal with, he busied himself with unprotected citizens of various countries.

Today the world community charges the Colonel with having destroyed the lives of 441 passengers of one American and one French aircraft in 1988 and 1989. Qaddafi's relative is among the suspects. Since Qaddafi refused to extradite them to the international investigation commission, an air blockade of Libya, embargo on military supplies and on the servicing of military equipment and a reduction of Libyan diplomatic personnel abroad have been introduced to be effective from April 15.

Muammar Qaddafi has long been called the leader of international terrorism, yet nobody wanted to quarrel with this rich oil-exporting Arab country...

The White House saved his life, the Kremlin supplied arms

Libya responded by refusing to supply oil to "unfriendly" countries inclusive of Russia on whose embassy in Tripoli an attack was organized on April 2. In all evidence, the "long and warm friendship" has come to an end.

After the coup which brought Qaddafi to power in 1969 Washington seemed much closer to the Colonel than Moscow. The American ambassador to Tripoli even saved his life, having warned him about a conspiracy. Yet the Soviet Union soon pushed the Americans aside by its readiness to supply arms without long formalities like Congressional hearings. Soviet arms began to flood Libya in the early 1970s in exchange for hard currency. In 1973 Qaddafi began paying by supplies of quality oil which the USSR had the right to resell, making a considerable profit.

However, no solid ideological friendship with Libya materialized. Its leader turned out to be an irreconcilable anti-Communist. Common to the countries was their anti-imperialist course, with Moscow shyly overlooking Libyan escapades.

In 1986 the Soviet Afro-Asian Solidarity Committee sent its representatives to Tripoli at the invitation of the analogous Libyan organization called Masaba. As usual, the Soviet delegation went there with the intention to talk about their solidarity with Afro-Asian countries fighting against imperialism and make some purchases, and only in the course of the forum was it made clear that Masaba was not so much a solidarity committee as a terrorist centre possessing a definite programme of actions – to explode, kill and so on... A few years later a prominent Soviet statesman who had arrived there to take part in another forum of the kind at Libya's invitation refused point blank to take a seat in the first row reserved for VIPs for fear of being photographed. After a small row he managed to hide out somewhere among the audience.

A reactor for a strange friend

There has never been love between Libya and the USSR. On the level of the protocol the Libyan side tried to show every now and then that it was "more equal" than ours. During the visit of Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin to Tripoli the members of the Soviet delegation had to carry their luggage themselves. When Qaddafi's right hand Abdel Salam Galloud arrived on a visit to Moscow, he reboarded the plane, dicovering that Kosygin hadn't come to meet him, and waited for an hour and a half till the latter arrived at the airport. Ambassadors stood in a rank at the Kremlin to no avail waiting for Qaddafi to come out and greet them, during his visit to the USSR in 1985. The Libyan leader failed to make his appearance – he was sitting barefoot in his room helping himself to tea with one of his retinue. Generally speaking, the Colonel who used to play with his cane scared Soviet Party hierarchs.

Yet "big" interests took priority above small offences. The Soviet Union even built a nuclear reactor for training specialists in Libya – a

fishy gesture, to say the least. Military departments fulfilled their plans of currency incomes thanks to Libya and, of course, of no less profitable business trips at Libya's expense. The information about our currency operations with Libya remain secret to this day. However, the following information has become available: Tripoli has payed us 16 billion dollars all in all, still owing another four...

Money taught us tolerance

Libya was second to Iraq in the profit the Soviet Union made in the arms trade. Yet unofficially there was much complaining in Moscow that Qaddafi was an unpredictable partner. He used to hand over Soviet weapons to the most inconvenient places from Moscow's point of view in order to support "the anti-imperialist revolution." Terrorists even turned out to possess Soviet rockets.

However, money taught us tolerance. The Soviet press was instructed "to see the deeper side" in terrorism, i.e. not to condemn bandit actions against unprotected civilians. Terrorists were said to be people driven to despair. Far more terrible was the policy of state terrorism persued by the USA and Israel, which was considered precisely the root of the evil.

Qaddafi's stance vis-à-vis communism became slightly more tolerant in the course of time. He adopted the course of the so-called radical socialist orientation and invented a "post-Communist model" in which "all the best that can be borrowed from capitalism and communism was taken into consideration." Soviet leaders liked the Libyan leader's trend of thinking and, what was the most important thing, he was a reliable stronghold in confrontation with the USA. Even the Khomeini Iran which regarded the Soviet Union as satan incarnate suited Moscow as an opposing force to the United States.

The strengthening of ties with the Soviet Union in this bipolar world was rather advantageous for Libya because it could always resort to its powerful backer in its confrontation with world imperialism. That "the Big Brother" did not condemn terrorism was interpreted by Qaddafi as encouragement of his trans-continental guerrilla warfare.

The disintegration of the Union and the quick reorientation of Moscow's foreign policy was an unpleasant surprise to him.

The losses

Russian diplomacy engaged in active mediating activities in the settling of the terrorism issue, making use of the Soviet Union's long-standing relations with Libya. It was, of course, primarily dictated by the awakening of respect for universal human values – but the desire to be useful to its Western partners is also apparent here.

Since Libya denies its citizens' involvement in terrorist actions our diplomats suggested to Libyan leadership handing over those suspected of organizing the explosions of the aircraft under the jurisdiction of the United Nations Secretary-General or of the League of Arab States. The latter couldn't be suspected of partiality by Qaddafi.

In its discussions of the problem with the United States the Russian Foreign Ministry emphasizes the region's specificity: sanctions against Iraq have been imposed quite recently, now it's the turn of another Arab country. It has barely been possible to subdue religious extremists in Algeria; won't this extremism break out with more strength and on a wider scale, if the UN decides to punish Qaddafi? The Arab world will again raise the question of double standards – Israel emerges unscathed every time while "police actions" are repeatedly aimed against Arabs. Such a mood can endanger the peace process in the Middle East.

Russia has found itself in a very bad situation regardless of whether these recommendations are listened to or not. Moscow voted in favour of the sanctions in the UN Security Council – abstention would have been simply immoral. However, voting this way cost Russia large financial losses. The CIS military experts (numbering about three and a half thousand people in Libya) will have to come back home, whereas the balance of Qaddafi's debt to Russia is, possibly, as good as non-existent.

"A tough guy brought up by the street"

The Libyans who do not like Qaddafi have all grounds to fear him. The Colonel is neither a lunatic nor a fanatic, but a cynical monarch free from moral norms

Leonid Mlechin

Muammar Qaddafi is an advocate of permanent revolution, and as such he could be considered Trotsky's disciple. Having dethrowned in 1969 West-oriented King Idris, the young officer began to continually reorganize the system of his own power, destroying all those he deems his enemies and getting rid of all those who are not sufficiently devoted to him.

A Trotsky's disciple?

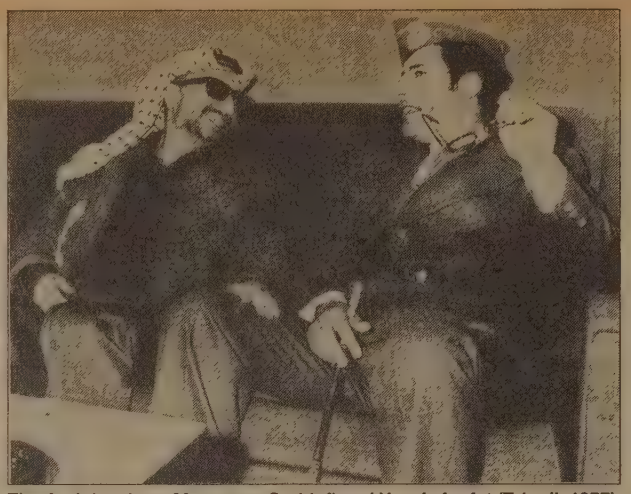
Libya is a country with a small population, mostly bedouins who are not easily integrated into a contemporary society. Qaddafi would have remained an obscure chieftain if not for the petrodol-

Colonel Qaddafi in the company of General Secretary Brezhnev and Foreign Minister Gromyko on his Mosow visit in 1981. The haughty leader of Libyan revolution wearing his cane annoyed even his Soviet friends

lars which began to flood the country in the 1970s.

Free from prejudices of a democratic society where a politician is responsible for his words as a matter of principle, and if exposed as a liar he has to vacate his office, while found guilty of his countrymen's destruction, he may be brought to dock, Muammar Qaddafi used to do what he chose to. According to one Libyan dissident, "Qaddafi is a typical bedouin. If he is riding a camel and wants to turn the corner, he just turns without waiting for the green light."

He often announced he was leaving all posts only to immediately occupy them again. Formally, he is not even the head of the state, his only official post is the Supreme Commander. However, his power is determined not by a title – he likes best to be called "the Leader of the Libyan Revolution" – but by the full control he exercises over the army, security forces and the power machinery. His power is limited by neither parliament, nor political parties, nor the free press.



The Arab brethren Muammar Qaddafi and Yassir Arafat (Tripoli, 1977). "Qaddafi treated Palestinians as mercenaries, making them work this money off"

Foreigners laugh, while Libyans admire

Like many Oriental chieftains, he is irresistably attracted by buffonic military uniforms and pompous ceremonies. Some observers have doubted his mental sanity, while some Western experts believe that the leader of the Libyan revolution lives in a schizophrenic world of his own. Compared to him, Mussolini seems a sensible conservative statesman.

Yet Qaddafi's lunatic behaviour has rather definite limits. His irrational manifestations are rather a consequence of impunity typical for a totalitarian state.

He has never done anything which might endanger his position. The Colonel may cry out whatever nonsense he pleases at public rallies, but he will never afford any action which could result in his losing power. He remembers the history of Uganda's dictator Idi Amin who lost everything and was expelled from the country.

This line of conduct testifies not to lunacy, but to utter pragmatism and cynicism.

Those who know Qaddafi well enough consider him a "smart tough guy brought up by the street." He is perceptive of his country's pulse, and his countrymen appreciate him as a person who can defend himself and who has really improved life.

Foreigners laugh when they see him appearing in public wearing an exotic uniform and escorted by female bodyguards, yet many like it in Libya. Qaddafi has the charisma of a strong personality able to get his way. It should not be forgotten, however, that those Libyans who are not fond of Qaddafi have all reasons to fear him.

His agents have killed more Arabs than Israelis

A 27-year-old officer came to power, having a ready list of his mortal enemies. Israel topped the list, though Qaddafi wisely refrained from engaging directly in hostilities against the Israeli army. Israel was followed by nearly all advanced countries which for some reason or other incurred the wrath of the leader of the Libyan revolution upon themselves.

He spent his petrodollars on purchasing all kinds of up-to-date weaponry from the Soviet Union. In 1976 he signed with Moscow a contract for buying 12 billion-worth of weapons, including 2,800 tanks.

Yet, when he had armed his 58,000-strong army with tanks and missiles, his Air Force, with 500 military aircraft and his fleet, with 6 submarines, he not only understood that he was unable to oppose Israel all by himself, but he also realized that he couldn't afford taking part in a serious war at all.

Qaddafi failed to avail himself of nukes. He has a Soviet-made nuclear reactor at his disposal, but, in all evidence, the desired goal is still a way off.

Moscow has never been overenthusiastic about its unpredictable ally, and even in the heydays of its friendship with Tripoli it didn't sell Qaddafi ballistic missiles and long-rang aircraft like MiG-29. Posses sion of super-moder weapons could have encour aged the psychologically un stable Colonel to start large-scale adventure whic would have resulted in a nev Middle East war.

Terrorism was a way out o this insulting situation fo Qaddafi.

Qaddafi promised to de stroy Israel and to overthrov reactionary regimes in Arat countries. Yet he carries or nicely with "reactionaries" and is at odds with his "com rades-in-arms" – Palesti nians, Syrians and the Iraqis Libyan agents have killed by far more Arabs than Israelis The first symptom of Qad dafi's intention to support internationa terrorism was the solemn funeral he ar ranged for the five Palestinian terrorist killed by the Munich police in 1972 afte they had shot the armless Israeli Olym pic team.

That time Colonel Qaddafi headed a long procession which marched through the centre of the Libyan capital and handed $5,000,000 to Yassir Arafat, head of the Fath which had carried out the action in Munich under the assumed name of "Black September."

The avaricious "father" and the disappointed "children"

Qaddafi suddenly realized in the 1970s that terrorism was a wonderful toy which created an illusion of power over the entire world and made the world press write about him. Precisely at that moment he came up with a lot of petrodollars which he could spend on terrorists' services. Having initiated a real war, he might lose all, while starting a campaign of terrorism, he was running no risks at all.

Qaddafi's propaganda depicted him as a "father of a worldwide revolution." True though, when his "children" came to him with their needs they were not given much. Qaddafi gave them weapons, money, passports and refuge only when he found their activity advantageous to him, always complaining that they killed too little for such money.

He is utterly egoistic – no philanthropy even for the sake of revolution. Qaddafi can deliver a lengthy speech at a public rally about the necessity to help Palestinians who have to fight to drive away the Israelis from the occupied lands, but once in his study, he

would sign an order to stop financing his "brethren."

As early as 1979 Arafat's deputy Abu Ayad complained: "Qaddafi believes that Palestinians are obliged to fulfil only his orders, that we must unconditionally uphold his line, that we must be friends of his friends and enemies of his enemies. He treats us as mercenaries who are paid and made to work the expences off."

Honecker ordered: Libyans are not to be bothered!

In 1986 Americans took drastic actions against Libya as an attempt to stop Qaddafi. In March pilots of the Sixth Fleet patroled the Libyan borders, causing him a lot of trouble. On March 24 the aircraft carrier *Yorktown* crossed the "deadline" established by Qaddafi. Taken at his word, the Libyan leader ordered his fleet to attack the Americans, which was precisely what had been expected in Washington. Two Libyan ships were sunk, one damaged, and ground-based radar stations and rocket launchers shelled. It was a great humiliation to Qaddafi.

He decided to take revenge and ordered to explode a large facility in West Berlin frequented by Americans. Now that the archives of the GDR Stasi are open, the whole story has come to the surface.

Americans learned about suspicious preparations in West Berlin from the British who had deciphered radio messages between Tripoli and the so-called People's Bureau (the Libyan Embassy) in East Berlin. Washington tried to prevent Qaddafi from carrying out his intentions through the mediaton of Moscow, the latter's major ally.

The Chargé d'Affairs of the Soviet Embassy in Washington was invited to the State Department and produced proofs of Libyan activity in West Berlin. The same information was sent by Americans to the Soviet Embassy in East Berlin. They hoped that the USSR and the GDR would make Qaddafi abandon his plans, but these countries did nothing, although they knew everything without having been informed by the Americans.

On March 20 head of the Second Chief Directorate (counterintelligence) of the GDR Ministry of State Security General Kratsch informed the Minister of State Security Erich Mielke, now tried in Germany, that Libyans were preparing an explosion. On March 24 a special report for SUPG General Secretary Erich Honecker was compiled. Honecker ordered to stay away, granting Libyans complete freedom to do as they wished.

The corpse of an assassinated Libyan emigrant, Qaddafi's opponent, was found in the trunk of a car left on a street in Rome

On April 4 a cipher message from the West Berlin People's Bureau was intercepted – the action was to be carried out the next morning. A few hours later, when a bomb was exploded in the West Berlin dancing hall La Belle killing three and injuring two hundred people, the People's Bureau radiogrammed to Tripoli: "Action carried out. No traces left."

The reverse side of Qaddafi's cruelty and unlimited power is fear. He mortally fears conspiracies and attempts on his life, constantly changes residence, tries not to spend two nights running in the same place. He considers everyone who hasn't joined him his enemy.

"I remain of the same opinion"

He mortally fears the opposition made up of his own former followers, who have been deposted by him and have fled abroad. In May 1984 15 members of the opposition National Salvation Front attacked his headquarters in Tripoli. It was a suicidal attempt, because the headquarters was guarded by tanks and anti-tank guns...

The terrorist groups at Qaddafi's disposal tried at various times to kill Sadat, King Hussein, King Hassan, Yasser Arafat and some moderate Palestinians – the latter attempts were the most successful.

According to various assessments, 20 training bases have been created in Libya; the training includes a six-month basic course followed by a special course for those who would deal with explosives.

By the end of the 1980s Qaddafi largely lost interest in international terrorism, but the network of training camps remained. Any person of African or Middle Eastern origin can take the complete course of training here. Everyone is paid a stipend of 400 to 1000 dollars.

* * *

After Communist regimes in Eastern Europe collapsed Qaddafi found himself in isolation.

His message of August 19 last year sent to Gennady Yanayev to express his complete support for the putschists only added to his position as an outcast. Later the leader of the Libyan revolution deemed it necessary to emphasize that the telegram of greeting he had sent to the putschists was by no means incidental: "I remain of the same opinion and I consider the telegram and all words therein contained a political document I will never denounce."

Qaddafi is no more than an outsider in international politics and even in the Middle East process now. His former allies have abandoned him. The West, as before, shuns "the mad dog," as President Reagan has dubbed him. Arab leaders don't need him. The Middle East has entered the era of negotiations, and the Libya-backed terrorists can no longer play a decisive part in this game.

Photo from Der Spiegel (Germany)

East European security – illusion and reality

Laszlo Borhi,
political scientist

The end of the artificial stability in Europe calls for new security arrangements in Europe. Cold War security arrangements were made against conflict between two blocks of countries, but none counted with it within the blocks themselves. Regional military conflict is no longer unthinkable, the security relations in Europe have become more complicated, more difficult to see with any degree of clarity.

The primary source of uncertainty is Eastern Europe, but instability of that region might threaten the security of Western Europe itself.

What are the sources of instability?

1. Nationalism: aspiration to create one nation states in the region;

2. There is not one single state in Eastern Europe which does not have potential territorial claim over the other;

3. The dissolution of states in the region.

A new all-European security sistem has a dual purpose:

firstly, to preserve the integrity, security of Western Europe;

secondly, to maintain and expand the democratization of Eastern Europe – democratization, it is believed, would in itself reduce the possibility of violent conflict.

To achieve these goals we need a lasting, all-embracing new European security system to be worked out on a long-term basis; plus a short-term solution which would safeguard security in the transition period.

The positions of the four powers

Many believe, that a new version of today's US-West European collective security system would guarantee the stability of Eastern Europe, which could join the Western integration, become part of the European Community and enjoy the benefits of West European collective security.

Yet, this optimistic version gives rise to doubts. Where does Europe end? What about those countries which are unable or unwilling to join the EEC?

Secondly, foreign policy and military integration in the West lag far behind other processes of integration.

Thirdly, even if all went well, and the whole of Europe – including Russia – entered the European Community, and the Western security umbrella were extended to Eastern Europe organizationally, would it work for, e.g., Lithuania or Hungary in the event of serious crisis?

Will NATO defend the East Europeans from themselves?

Because of these dilemmas we must take a new look at the future of the security of our region.

NATO means four powers: the US, Great Britain, France and Germany. What East European policy can we expect from these countries?

The US. The only country capable of exerting political and military power in any part of the globe. America has a long history of having no policy in the Central-East European region, it has no economic or other bonds attaching it there. These small countries are unimportant in themselves, although America would welcome their economic integration with the rest of Europe.

Military intervention, or any measure which might even remotely threaten American security, are out of the question. American public opinion – an important ingredient of foreign policy in that country – would never tolerate American military commitment in Eastern Europe. Decision makers there do not think the Eastern European turmoil is a menace to their security – Yugoslavian events are seen as "tribal conflict" there.

Yugoslavia. In August 1914, this land saw the beginning of the First World War. And war is again here today... *Photo from Time (USA)*

Great Britain. Essentially the same outlook as the Americans, the difference is that their actions are limited by their relative political and military weakness. Never in their history did they have a policy in this region, not even in times of crisis, and show no sign of a new approach.

France. This country followed an active East European policy after 1918 in order to fill the power vacuum there and to promote her economic interests. Yet, she did not live up to her military obligations in the region.

In the 1960's de Gaulle made an attempt to revive the Little Entente with the participation of Poland. Nowadays, however, France shows little signs of ambition in Central-Eastern Europe, and is focusing on her traditional sphere of interest, North Africa, the Mediterranean and Western Europe.

Germany is the country bound to the region by centuries-long cultural, historical and political ties though in the case of a number of countries the connotations of these relations are negative.

Before the war Germany provided a market for East European goods as a result of the complementary nature of these economics. Based on her historical record, economic and political interest, cultural and humanitarian ties, Germany is most likely to become the new – this time positive – hegemonic power in Eastern Europe, just like the United States was after 1947 for Western Europe. Germany might, as a hegemonic power provide the source of stability and economic growth for the participants of the system on the basis of reciprocal advantages. The German economy will be able to exert a pull on Eastern Europe by providing capital for growth, market for goods and transfer of technology. German democracy could influence Eastern Europe's democratic transition.

Moreover, Germany's overambitious power aspirations would be

...we can delineate the borders. But shall we be able to live within them?
Drawing from the newspaper Hufvudstadsbladet (Finland)

Three cornerstones of European security

For sure, an effective mechanism for guaranteeing the security in Europe is necessary. But just as surely, it will take years to set up such a mechanism. While the factors of destabilization about which Laszlo Borhi writes are at work today and will continue to be (possibly growing in intensity) tomorrow and in the future. Measures must be taken right now to keep conflict situations from growing into armed clashes – regional or continental wars.

What measures?

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, there arose the possibility of the unofficial transfer of nuclear technology, fissionable materials and even nuclear weapons to other countries or use of weapons of mass destruction in inter-ethnic conflicts. The reasons for concern are clear: if it is possible to kidnap an Army commander, seize the military supply depots and buy an armoured troop carrier or a GRAD artillery system, then why not think of such an operation with nuclear missiles, shells, bombs and chemical weapons?

And there is the **official,** in any case **semi-official,** possibility of doing so. After all, not one of the states of the CIS, except for Russia which has officially taken upon itself all the obligations of the former USSR, has signed or the more so ratified, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons nor the conventions on chemical and bacteriological weapons, nor other international agreements banning weapons of mass destruction.

If the CIS countries aren't immediately made party to such international documents, if they don't take on the corresponding obligations, then there can be no talk of greater trust in the new sovereign states. And precisely mutual trust is the foundation of any system of security.

Just as acute is the question of the legal fixing of the existing borders. The disintegration of the USSR in effect annulled the corresponding agreements on the borders of the neighbouring republics of the former Union. And though all the states of the CIS signed the Helsinki Act proclaiming the inviolability of the European borders, mutual claims are already being made. Someone in Lithuania lays claim to the Russian part of the former Eastern Prussia; someone in Byelorussia, to a part of Lithuania; someone in Latvia or Estonia, to a part of the Pskov Region; and in Romania, to a part of the Ukraine. The personal declarations at times take on an official character. And they often refer to the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact. Therefore, it evidently would be useful for the leaders of the CIS to confirm their common interest in the inviolability of the external borders of the Commonwealth and a differentiated approach to clearing up disputes in a joint statement before the conclusion of the corresponding agreements with the neighbours. With all the injustice of Stalin's pact with Hitler those countries whose soldiers went together with the Nazis to the Volga and the Caucasus don't have a right to refer to it.

Finally, in order to create an all-encompassing system of European security it is necessary evidently within the CSCE framework **to work out a generally recognized means of solving inter-ethnic disputes** which would keep them from turning into civil wars.

The adherence of the countries of the CIS to agreements on weapons of mass destruction, a declaration on the borders and working out, in the framework of the CSCE, a generally acknowledged means of solving inter-ethnic conflicts are probably the three cornerstones on which, taking into account the situation in Eastern Europe, a system of general European security can be built.

Alexander Didusenko

curbed by the European integration of which Germany is a well-integrated part, its power being counterbalanced by British and French military power in the West, Russian in the East.

Nuclear deterrence won't help

On the regional level a given hegemonic power might fulfill certain functions of guardianship, offset regional anomalies. On the continental level this is more difficult. Could a NATO-type organization do the trick?

We think in itself no. NATO worked on the basis of collective security and nuclear deterrence. We have good reason to believe that collective security does not really work. France, e.g. never believed in it, thus her own nuclear deterrent. Collective security – the one-for-all-and-all-for-one principle embodied in the League of Nations system between the two wars failed to contain Italy or Germany. The machinery was there, but common interest, the fuel to make it work, was not. The foreign policy of a state is determined much more by domestic inputs – institutions, lobby groups, public opinion – than by rational answers to outside challenges.

All this suggests that it was nuclear deterrence much more than anything else that did the trick to preserve peace on the continent in the last forty years. Yet, nuclear deterrence works against one colossal enemy, but is useless against a multitude of regional armed conflicts and civil wars.

Thus, we have good reason to believe, that present security arrangements would be insufficient to solve security problems. The more so that economic, cultural or other relations between the two halves of the continent were never intensive enough to make the West feel that it was in its vital interest to preserve peace in Eastern Europe.

One solution would be an international system working along the combination of balance of power, integration and hierarchy.

Germany – on the lowest level – would play the role of preserving East European stability and of promoting the political and economic rise of the region just like the US did for Western Europe in the 50's and early 60's.

Security on the second, continental level would be guaranteed by institutions and balance of power: French and British nuclear deterrence would check German strength. Thus this level would constrain German – or others' – aspirations. The highest level would be represented by the United States – tied to the continent institutionally and through self-interest – the only power that can balance the aspirations of any European power.

Russia, of course, remains an immense military power and will hopefully join the US as a guarantor of, rather than a menace to, European stability on the highest level.

Until a new, effective European security system evolves East European countries – each with different threat perceptions must cater for their own security.

This could be along the lines of the Visegrad talks – arrangements between Poland, Hungary and Czecho-Slovakia, but widened to include other nations too. These arrangements and future policies in the East must be bereaved of illusions. The illusions of Western sympathy which would solve all our problems.

BUDAPEST

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In Vukovar it's like it was in Stalingrad

The paratroopers from Russia are welcome. They are teaching the Belgians to boil water

The landing of a Russian battalion of paratroopers in the Balkans in times past would have been sure to evoke a reaction: the usual "limited contingent" to render "brotherly help in dealing with a conterrevolutionary conspiracy." But today things are different. When the Russian battalion of paratroopers arrived in Yugoslavia (and with military hardware and arms) this time there were no panic shouts of warning: "The Russians are coming!" They were not even frightened by the fact that this was another 12-year interval like between the actions of the Soviet troops in 1956 in Hungary and 1968 in Czechoslovakia, or New Year's Eve 1980 in Afghanistan and 1992 in Yugoslavia.

The Russian paratroopers came to Yugoslavia as part of the United Nations peace-keeping forces. Of the 14,000 United Nations "limited contingent" there will be around a thousand Russians. For the first time Russian (former Soviet) troops tried on the United Nations uniform.

The field of action of the "blue helmets" on the territory of Yugoslavia is divided into four sectors. Russian Colonel Alexander Promchenkov is in charge of the Eastern Sector. Besides the Russian battalion, there'll be several others from NATO countries under Colonel Alex (as they have nicknamed him here).

When, after a long search, my colleague from the newspaper *Trud* and I managed to find the Russian officers not far from Osijek, they were truly glad to see their fellow countrymen. Up to then only Western correspondents, for whom Russian "blue helmets" walking around Europe was a real sensation, had "attacked" them. The fifteen officers with whom we met had arrived in Yugoslavia two weeks before the whole battalion.

The territory between Vukovar and Osijek which they are to control was the hottest spot in the Yugoslavian war. In Vukovar, which is the centre of the region, there is not a single undamaged building. The reporters have already compared Vukovar with Stalingrad. When I told the Russian paratroopers how one of my colleagues proposed holding the regular meeting of leaders of the Soviet republics in Vukovar, they responded: "It can be held in Stepanakert."

The Russian paratroopers are getting accustomed to their new status as United Nations troops and learning, in the words of Colonel Yury Levchenko, their ABCs – the UN instructions for their troops. When talking, especially at first, they insisted on their neutrality. But later they didn't hide that it was pleasant for them to help their brothers Slavs. The local population (mostly Serbs live here) met them openly and with hospitality as Slavs. "In the village where the soldiers were to be quartered," Colonel Levchenko told us, "we were put up in one of the few intact houses remaining – a three-story house. The owner worked in Germany for 20 years, earned some money and put all his savings into building this house. When he found out that we were Russians, he said: 'Live in our house, the porch is enough for my wife and me. Russians will be defending us.'"

You could understand the Serb – the Yugoslav army is leaving these regions and the people fear more bloodshed. The UN troops, including the Russian lads among them, must prevent it.

By the way, the boys keep trying to understand what caused the Croatians and the Serbs to take up arms against each other. Diplomacy aside, one of the lieutenants said about this: "In the villages the farmers live in two-story villas like our secretaries of the regional Party committees used to. In the stores there are a lot of nice things. Why didn't they get on?"

The Russian paratroopers live in Yugoslavia relying entirely on their own resources. When we got to know them better I jokingly asked: "Is it true that you came to Yugoslavia with your own canned beef?" "Yes," answered a colonel. "According to the UN instructions each contingent must bring enough supplies with it for the first two months. We have a field bakery, a laundry and a kitchen. And of course canned beef." And to convince us he had us treated to a paratrooper's meal.

After lunch we found out that our new acquaintances are paid in dollars which many of them are holding in their hands for the first time in their life. An officer gets around 1,000 greenbacks a month. True, part (the paratroopers didn't say how much) goes to the Russian Ministry of Finance.

The only problem our Russians had at first was with tea: there were no good electric immersion heaters. But our men found a way out right away: one of them rigged up a device using two razor blades. When the neighbouring Belgians saw how two litres of water began to boil after a minute, they shouted in delight: "Russian electronics." And wanted to buy the patent.

A Russian battalion on the march – with its canned beef... *Photo by ITAR – TASS*

Gennady Sysoyev,
New Times correspondent

OSIJEK–BELGRADE

A space umbrella for the military-industrial complex

Does new Russia need a new SDI?

Vladimir Moskvin,
Candidate of Science (History)

Russians are probably fated to worship what they had once cursed. At a recent meeting of the UN Security Council President Yeltsin suddenly declared about the need "to make anti-missile defence systems simpler and cheaper and abolish anti-satellite systems." He pointed to the urgent need of building "a global system of defence for the world community." For this purpose the Strategic Defence Initiative of the United States could be redesigned by using high technologies developed in the defence complex of Russia.

A surprising turn

Thus, after an outright rejection of SDI Moscow accepted the American programme and even expressed its desire for cooperation. This turn of events came as a surprise to the West and especially to Russia. The new initiative is said to have stunned specialists in the Russian Foreign Ministry and the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States. They are wondering how it is possible to observe the ABM treaty, the adherence to which Moscow confirms at the highest level, and simultaneously build "a global defence system." For the treaty prohibits the creation of large-scale anti-missile systems and, what is important, their deployment in outer space (article V). Specialists do not know how to find a strategy that would preserve the ABM treaty while creating the semblance of following the "global defence" concept advanced by scientists close to the Russian higher-ups, and prevent Russia from being recklessly drawn into a new round of the arms race.

Drawing by Victor Bogorad

Few people understood the real essence of the matter and waited for explanations from the Russian leadership. However, explanations merely confused the matter. Marshal Shaposhnikov spoke about a system based on "the space means developed by Americans and the ground means of anti-missile defence developed by Russia." According to Academician Velikhov, only "an early warning system" is proposed, not space-based anti-missile systems. If one is to believe journalists, President Yeltsin confirmed that he had in mind a joint tracking and warning of a missile threat, and nothing more.

It remains to be seen whether it is a cunning diplomatic move to impel the American partners to adopt positions more acceptable to Russia or to have a "collusion" between the two administrations. The latter fear that the general public, which supports the ABM treaty, can disrupt their plans of creating a new variant of the SDI in the common interests of the military industrial complexes of Russia and the United States.

It became known from authoritative sources that Russia's desire to take part in the working out of a new SDI was included in the text of the President's statement at the very last moment, a surprise for the original speech-writers. This was apparently done so that the Russian advocates of the ABM treaty could not set out their counterarguments. Some believe that the change was made under the influence of academicians Moiseyev and Velikhov and Semyonov, a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and general designer of the

Quite recently the Kremlin intimidated the citizens of the former Soviet Union with grim consequences of the implementation of the "star wars" programme. And today it is prepared to join in the development of space weapons?

research and production association Energia. Semyonov is evidently going to build a new early warning system on the basis of designs from the cold-war period. It is believed that the idea was supported also by officials of the military-industrial complex whose voice is heard ever more loudly in the circles close to the Russian President.

"An ideal solution"

While the Russian leadership proclaimed disarmament plans many key officials from the former defence department at the CPSU's central committee and the defence and state security department, in President Gorbachev's office, were invited to work in the Russian administration and are again able to control, almost fully, the country's defence policy. Even with the present-day economic and social crisis in the country powerful forces within the Russian military-industrial complex are making every effort to keep their potential and looking for a pretext to once again launch the arms drive.

Yeltsin's initiative seems to be "an ideal solution" for the military-industrial complex. The designing of components for "global defence," and a multi-billion expenditure, can be justified by the noble aims of further promoting relations with the United States and "the strengthening of world peace." It can even be hinted that Russia has the chance of receiving dollars from the American partner in payment for the design work done by Russian scientists. Another argument is also used, namely, the urgent need for building – under the UN aegis and on a worldwide scale – an effective system of collective defence against the threat of a nuclear missile strike.

A considerable base for such cooperation was laid down in Russia in the course of preparing "asymmetric" and "symmetric" replies to the SDI in the past. By making references to the existing backlogs, the defence industry officials evidently managed to get the support of the Russian leadership. It is possible, however, that concern for big cheeses in the military-industrial complex can also be explained by the desire of our leadership to tame the representatives of the most powerful and not yet broken structure of the administrative command-style system of government.

Not without the assistance of academicians connected with the defence industry, the generals of the military-industrial complex impelled the Russian President to announce that, together with Americans, our scientists and designers are prepared to develop a "global defence system." After that the United States and Russia will have "to produce and launch it" by joint efforts (possibly with the participation of other nuclear states), and jointly "exploit" it.

"Brilliant pebbles" on the road to security

What is "a global system" like? Last autumn, at bilateral talks in Geneva on anti-missile defence and space issues, the American delegation proposed jointly working out a system of "global protection against limited strikes" and opening talks on "a new ABM regime" which would replace the ABM treaty and allow both sides to carry out "a limited deployment of ABM systems for protection against limited ballistic missile strikes."

The Americans are planning to include three components in the future system.

First, mobile tactical anti-missiles, in particular the modernized anti-aircraft missile complex Patriot and the ACEC, ERINT and THAAD systems.

Second, a "limited" ABM system on US territory (750 land-based GBI and E21 interceptors) capable of annihilating around 200 strategic missiles fired by accident or in an unauthorized launching. In the opinion of US experts, it is the most probable variant, because about 200 missiles can be fired by the commander of a strategic Typhoon submarine if he were to lose control, or from one deployment base of intercontinental ballistic missiles.

Third, space-based systems to protect the theatre of war and the continental part of the United States, "brilliant pebbles" anti-missiles (the interception of ballistic missiles with a flying range of over 600 km), multi-functional space-based "brilliant eyes" sensors, ground control centres and command points. The Americans were not and are not going to give up the deployment of anti-missiles in space. In their opinion, without such components a future "limited" system would be "extremely costly and ineffective."

True, Washington pledged, together with Moscow, to set limits on such deployment with the aim of guaranteeing the effectiveness of strategic deterrence forces on both sides. It was supposed that, regardless of Moscow's reply, the United States would continue to implement the SDI programme in its new form, though till a certain time Washington promises to observe the AMB treaty.

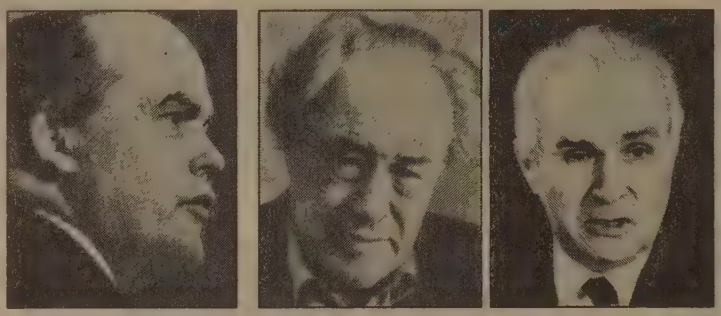
Such an approach was well reasoned. It can be asked, however, whether the Americans really need Russia's consent to withdraw from the ABM treaty or can they just do it themselves, especially in view of the present situation in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The neutralization of imaginary threats

One can argue, of course, whether the ABM treaty is outdated or not, or whether the former Soviet leaders adhered to it, due to their awareness that the Soviet Union was lagging behind the United States in the field of advanced space technologies. In the opinion of many Russian and American specialists, the new version of the SDI was devised for neutralizing imaginary threats.

Russia does not need such "protection" at all. The missile threat from Third World nations, should it appear, can safely be averted by missiles of the Soviet tactical anti-aircraft defence. Strategic ballistic carriers of weapons of mass destruction can hardly be produced in the Third World, even if a dozen of these nations join the missile or, God forbid, the nuclear club. Incidentally, membership of the nuclear club is not a serious argument either, for the manufacture of ballistic missiles takes 10 to 15 years and involves the expenditure of colossal resources which none of these countries have.

Such a missile programme is difficult to conceal, and the civilized world is able either to compel a state anxious to acquire a nuclear status to stop building up its military potential or to take drastic countermeasures, the effectiveness of which was demonstrated by operation Desert Storm. Countermeasures of this kind will cost much cheaper than any global defence system with the use of new technologies. It will be recalled that, by the irony of fate, this threat was created by the Soviet Union, which supplied its friends and allies in the Arab world with Scud B missiles which became well known after the war in the Persian Gulf.



Academicians Velikhov and Moiseyev and Semyonov, a corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences: they are reputed to be co-authors of plans for an "American-Russian SDI"

The danger of an accidental or unauthorized launching of American strategic missiles is practically ruled out, because the United States has perfect blocking procedures. Besides, this danger can be effectively combatted by improving the available organizational and technical means of averting undesirable launchings, for instance, by fitting all missiles with built-in mechanisms of self-destruction for an emergency situation.

The main thing is that any anti-missile defence system is ineffective in the purely military respect. It does not guarantee a country from "non-missile" threats, for a nuclear explosive device can easily be smuggled by terrorists in a suitcase or launched in a pilotless airplane. There are also special means for penetrating through anti-missile defences, say, the use of dummy warheads or warheads which, like a cruise missile, begin to glide as they approach the targets.

It is also impossible to ignore the negative reactions of other countries, say France or Argentina, and the world community as a whole, to the withdrawing from the ABM treaty. It can be supposed that such a move will cause legitimate discontent in neighbouring countries.

President Yeltsin's statement on Russia's readiness to take part in a new SDI has given a strong argument to those forces in the United States which have long sought to get through the Congress broad programmes for the arms race in space and are interested in violating the provisions of the ABM treaty.

The position should be defined clearly

Most likely, the Russian President was again misled by his advisers and experts. In the past few days Yeltsin's proposals have been increasingly interpreted not as a call for the deployment of an anti-missile system but as an idea of establishing "global control" over near-terrestrial space exercised jointly by way of an exchange of information between the United States and Russia and possibly other countries.

Of course, systems for the interception of strategic missiles, that is, "active" defence like "brilliant pebbles," and systems for an early warning of missile attacks are different things. The building of early warning systems is in no way limited, and it can only be welcomed. If only such systems are intended, the Russian authorities should have clearly stated that they are not going to give the green light to the placing of weapons in space. Without our analogues – "pebbles," the Russian military-industrial complex will have enough orders for devising only means of control and warning.

Besides, analyzing the intricacies of military space problems and the prospects of ensuring strategic stability in the world, where Russia and the United States today act as military and political allies, one should not forget about expenditure. It is doubtful that the deployment of a new SDI will not have an adverse effect on the Russian budget. According to most conservative estimates, the American system will cost the taxpayers from 40 to 150 billion dollars. It is not clear either what kind of technology the United States is prepared to share with Russia, even now when it seems indecent to talk about confrontation.

Should Moscow agree to spend colossal sums and violate the ABM treaty, to make steps not necessitated by any substantial change in the strategic situation?

The ecologists are letting out bubbles

Is it right to bargain when Nature is being polluted? Why not?

Such depressing scenes as the "lens" of dirty air over a large city or a half-dead river are unfortunately familiar to the inhabitants of many countries. They are less typical in Sweden, since strict nature conservation regulations have been enforced there very scrupulously and for a long time now. But now the voices appealing not to tie businessmen hand and foot but, having given freedom to the forces of the market, solve the problem by economic means, are gaining in strength.

"It is necessary to introduce 'emission reduction credits,'" asserts a professor of the Stockholm School of Economics, Bengt Kriström. "A company, having reduced its noxious discharges into the air or water below the level fixed by the government can then sell the rest of its quota to another firm which plans to increase production at its factory or build a new one. The total anthropogenic impact on nature will remain unchanged and even go down in accordance with the national or local demands." In 1968, they came up with an ingenious idea in Canada: one lake was taken and the effluent's overall biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) was established, then all the factories on its shores were invited to find a way of observing it. Due to legal battles then nothing came of it, but later in the States, they followed up on the initiative. They proposed creating "bubbles" inside which the same rules of the game would apply to any source of a certain kind of pollution.

The "bubbles" could be of any size: from local, covering the Dillon Reservoir in Colorado, for example, to the national, including the large power stations burning coal. Say, on the shores of the Dillon Reservoir there is a modern plant for which it is more expensive to further reduce the content of BOD in the effluents by 10 tons than to reduce the toxic drainage from the surrounding farms by 100 tons. It's more advantageous for the owners of the enterprise to pay the farmers for their losses in the inevitable changeover to nature-sparing chemicals. Likewise, the power companies can agree amongst themselves where and what to improve at the obsolete stations and possibly close down the worst offender in order to meet the demands of Bush's decree on reducing the sulphur exhausts into the atmosphere while not lowering the supply of electric power to the country or in any one of its regions.

"In Europe businessmen so far prefer the current system of special tariffs for pollution and even fines," Bengt Kriström goes on to say, "since it is always possible to come to an amicable agreement with the community or national authorities or resort to blackmail ('if you give us a hard time, we'll close the factory and lay off all the workers'). When companies fall under 'bubbles,' they have to come to agreement with other businessmen, and there's no twisting them around their finger."

In Sweden, first the scholars, then society

Drawing from Dagens Nyheter (Sweden)

and now even the politicians have come to acknowledge the new approach. The most perfect variant is the "bubble" in Hisingen. In this industrial region there are four oil refineries and the Volvo automobile plant, and all of these pollute the air with hydrocarbons. For nature and the inhabitants the reduction of poisonous fumes is more important than the contribution of the separate sources. It is achieved in various ways.

While the oil refineries have to seal tanks and pipes more tightly, Volvo has to change the very technology of production. The losses are absolutely incommensurate. Naturally, joint action in order to lower the leak of hydrocarbons when refining the oil would make sense, but no one will do that while the authorities make individual demands on each firm. Finding themselves inside the "bubble," the managers have no choice but to seek a collective, cheap and effective solution.

Does it turn out that life in the "bubble" is cheaper for the violator – the more the factory polluted the earth before, the easier technically, and at another's expense, to clean its murky wastes and the smoke tails? That's probably how it will be at first, think the economic ecologists (or ecological economists?), but later each cut in the total permitted volume and the increase in tariffs on the polluter will make his existence verey costly or simply unprofitable. He either will have to make changes in production or close, and the obtaining quota will be met by new and clean factories.

The attention of the ecologists and the economists is not only directed at industry, but also at transport, public utilities and agriculture, and everyday forms of pollution. Besides hydrocarbons, scholars of the Stockholm School of Economics propose "bubbles" covering sources releasing carbon dioxide, freons, nitrogen and chlorine compounds. They cover different regions: from Stockholm, where the power stations pollute the atmosphere with CO, to the zone of the Gulf of Bothnia, where the Swedish and Finnish pulp-and-paper factories dump chlorine into the river and sea water. The most ambitious "bubble" in scale is to be in the Baltics in order to lower the pollution of the region by Poland, the Baltic states and Russia through financial and technical assistance rendered by Northern Europe.

"It's best to begin with the local and departmental projects," Kriström thinks. "First we'll 'bubble' Sweden, then its neighbours, Finland and Norway. It's hard to say what then, but in principle it's necessary to look on the Earth as a single planetary 'bubble.' By the way, if per capita pollution quotas were to be introduced, the Americans and Russians would be the worst offenders. Apparently, globalism in combination with egalitarianism would not be to their liking, for they'd have to pay up for the quotas of the Indians and Chinese."

Alexander Polyukhov,
New Times correspondent
STOCKHOLM

The king so very much loved women

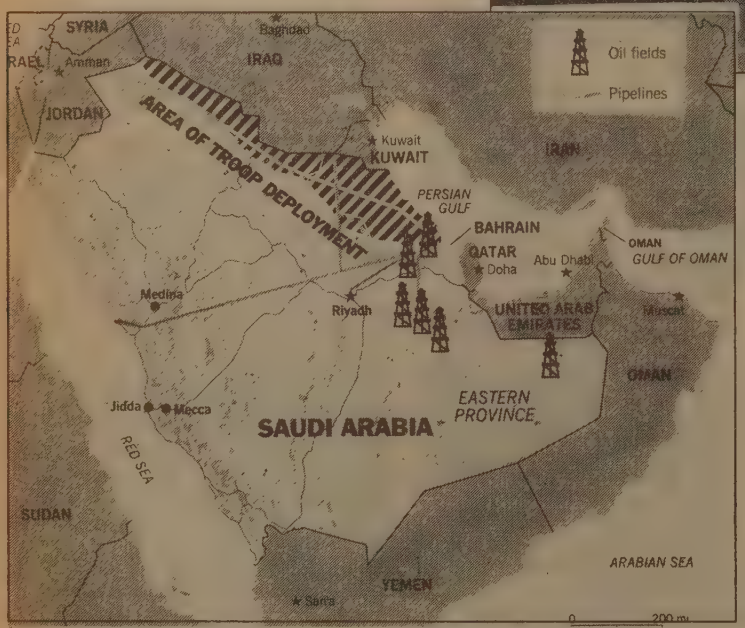
Yakov Borovoi

Shortly before he died Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud, the founding father of Saudi Arabia, six and a half feet tall, ordered his sons never to open the borders of the kingdom to foreigners.

Fahd ibn Abd al-Aziz, the present ruler of the country and the guardian of Islam's two holiest shrines, did not fulfil his father's behest. Saddam Hussein annexed Kuwait in August 1990 and warned that his next target was Saudi Arabia. Being in a desperate situation, Fahd was compelled to let "infidels" into the kingdom.

About 500,000 troops landed on the territory of Saudi Arabia and 2,000 Western journalists were granted visas. And this happened in a country which has a rigid taboo on all religions except Islam, forbids Jews to cross the frontiers of the kingdom, where women are not allowed to travel without accompanying men nor to appear in the public in "an indecent way," where a quota for the visits by foreign journalists (20 men a year) was strictly observed. Jewish servicemen appeared in Saudi Arabia, Christian chaplains read out prayers in its deserts, and women in army uniform revealed more than their eyes to others.

And now they challenge his power



King Fahd and his kingdom. During the Iraqi aggression the allied troops (marked by a dotted line on the map) stayed 1,500 km away from Islam's two holiest shrines – Mecca and Medina

The allied victory compelled the Saudis to ponder over the destiny of the nation and the future of absolutism. They concluded that if the king is unable to ensure their independence then, possibly, he should not rule the country solely.

However, the authorities view the victory in their own way – as proof of the effectiveness of the Saudi system, not as a catalyst for change.

The right way

Saudi Arabia took shape as a state in the first three decades of this century. The camel-mounted army of one of the oldest tribes in the Arabian peninsula, equipped with yataghans and headed by legendary Ibn Saud, forcibly united the separate Bedouin tribes. In 1932 an absolute monarchy was proclaimed with Riyadh as the capital.

Abd al-Aziz Ibn Saud devised a unique form of state unification. He skilfully turned his military victories into long-term alliances by taking a daughter of each tribal chief as a wife and thus promising each tribe which entered into the alliance that the first boy born of this daughter will become the future king. In this way the throne in Saudi Arabia passed from one half-brother to another.

Abd al-Aziz had 17 official wives, five of whom had the title of "the first wife." The five wives gave birth to 12 boys, and 23 more sons were born of other wives. Girls are not counted. Today the royal family numbers about 5,000 men. All high government posts in the kingdom are divided between them.

After the death of Ibn Saud the son of his first wife, also Saud, succeeded to the throne. Later he was forcibly deprived of the crown by his half-brother Faisal, the elder son of Ibn Saud's second wife, and died in exile. Faisal himself was killed in 1975 by one of the princes from a side branch of the clan. After the seven-year rule and mysterious death of Khalid, Ibn Saud's

The "American invasion" of Saudi Arabia. Americans were welcome guests at supermarkets

son from his third wife, the elder son of Ibn Saud's fourth wife – Fahd – became the king. Fahd also rules the country on the basis of the family consensus.

A former playboy becomes the king

He was a sybarite who left the kingdom in his youth for the sake of European entertainments. Of all the highs in life he preferred Scotch whisky, Russian caviare and beautiful women. He is said to have visited Beirut's nightclubs so often that he knew all main belly dancers by name. Legends were spread about his love affairs. If one is to believe rumours, he could lose a million dollars in a Monte Carlo casino over a weekend.

The same man, but several decades later, being the king of Saudi Arabia, is known for his caution bordering on indecision. For many years he has played a subtle game, maintaining a balance in the royal family, between the West and the Arab world, between the bent for modernization and the striving to preserve the semi-feudal culture of his people.

Such is Fahd Ibn Abd al-Aziz today. The difference between a light-minded prince and a cautious monarch reflects something more than the transformation of a young pleasure-seeker into a 69-year-old man.

A conversation held in 1953 played a crucial role in his life. In that year crown prince Faisal (later the king), known for his piety and ascetic way of life, called his half-brother Fahd to account and scolded him for disgracing himself and the kingdom. Faisal demanded that the prince return home and devote himself to serious government duties. In the event of refusal Fahd ran the risk of losing the claim to the throne. He had to give up his life as a playboy and become the minister of education, though his own education was limited to several years of study in a Koranic school. Later he held the post of minister of the interior and in 1975, when Faisal had been killed and the crown went to his brother Khalid, Fahd became the crown prince. The king, who had a heart disease, paid little attention to government affairs and Fahd virtually ruled the country for several years until, in 1982, after the death of Khalid, he succeeded to the throne.

The personal wealth of the Saudi king is made up of dues paid for each barrel of oil produced in the country, as well as of the charges paid to the House of Saud by its subjects for engaging in business. Subjects also pay for promotion in office and appointment to a post. By his wealth Fahd is second only to the Sultan of Brunei. The Saudi monarch has 12 palaces, from the Al-Yamama complex in the Empire style in Riyadh, worth 2.5 billion dollars, to a "cottage" in Marbella, Spain, four times as large as the White House. Fahd owns several jet aircraft and yachts. The taps in their bathrooms are made of pure gold. The main yacht is escorted by a ship equipped with Stinger anti-aircraft missiles.

Fahd took a fancy to the United States long ago, in 1945, when he, as a Saudi prince, was present at the ceremony for the founding of the United Nations. On his insistence, all his sons studied at American colleges.

Fahd has three wives and six sons, and only his health leaves much to be desired.

Money in a wooden trunk

Legend has it that all gold of the founder of the Saudi dynasty was kept in a small wooden trunk which the finance minister of that time or, more exactly, the treasurer hid during the night under his bed. The flow of petrodollars in the mid-1970s brought fabulous wealth to the Saudi monarchs. In those years the kingdom earned 20 to 100 billion dollars a year for the export of "black gold." Today, this country of Bedouins remains the world's main oil-rich state possessing a fourth of the explored reserves of crude oil. The Saudi regime receives about 90 percent of its wealth from the sale of this valuable raw material.

The interlacing of state power with oil production is so great that nearly all members of the royal family take part in the shaping of oil policy. Strategic trends are determined personally by King Fahd. The monarch, who is also prime minister, heads the Supreme Council of the Saudi Arabian Oil Company which controls the country's entire oil activity from extraction to sale.

Superb highways and ports, splendid towns in the desert, and wonderful squares in front of blazingly white mosques have been given life by petrodollars. True, not all plans could be realized. For instance, the planned transportation of icebergs from Antarctica to the shores of Saudi Arabia was snagged because not a single transport company in the world would undertake the delivery of an iceberg across the equator.

First-class free medical service has been introduced in the country. Education, from nurseries to universities, is also free of charge. The government also partly covers the expenses of citizens who study at colleges in the West. Each Saudi family gets free of charge 627 square metres of land and an interest-free loan of 80,000 dollars for 30 years for the building of a house. Interest-free loans are also extended to businessmen. And no one pays taxes.

Is democracy needed then?

One Saudi, expressing the opinion of many of his compatriots, told me: "Our government gives us much more than any government in so-called democratic states. And we do not need either democracy or a market economy."

Democracy the Saudi way

Alcoholic drinks, pornography and games of chance are banned in the country. Western films are not shown in cinemas. There are no discos. Video films, books and other publications are strictly censored.

However, many Saudis, those who are well-off, easily get round these bans by preaching a double standard. They pretend to be virtuous in public and enjoy themselves at home and during trips abroad.

There are no civil courts in Saudi Arabia and Islamic laws (Sharia) are commonly practised. In August 1990, at the urgent request of the White House, the king suspended public executions so as not to shock the world public. After the victory over Hussein this practice was resumed. Today the hands of thieves are again cut off in public squares. Unfaithful wives or husbands are stoned to death. Murderers and rapists are beheaded. Those who committed less serious offences are subjected to public flogging.

Slavery existed till the 1960s. Women wore black veils around their faces. They were not allowed to study even in primary school. The first shoots of freedom appeared in the 1970s. Women began to work in television for the first time and received broader opportunities in the field of education. But the overthrow of the pro-Western shah in Iran in 1979 and the seizure of power by Islamic fundamentalists in that country stemmed the tendency towards liberalization of the regime in Saudi Arabia. The House of Saud instantly became more pious. The police were granted additional rights. Armed patrols beat women who open their faces more than is allowed, and shopkeepers who are not quick enough to stop their trade for prayer.

Continuing to limit freedoms for the individual, the Saudi dynasty firmly clings to power. Members of the royal family hold all main posts in the kingdom. Crown price Abdullah is commander of the National Guard. Prince Sultan is minister of defence, and prince Nayef is minister of the interior. The governors of provinces are also members of the same family. It is impossible for ordinary people to get into the close circle of the power elite. Officials are not elected, and there are no political parties. The gathering of three and more people is banned in the country.

True, one element of tribal democracy has remained in Saudi Arabia. Saudis have access to their rulers. Any subject of the kingdom can knock at the doors of the royal palace, and he will be received. He will be allowed to apply to the monarch with any request. As a rule, people ask for assistance. For instance, subjects can ask for money to send a relative abroad for treatment or solicit for mediation in a land dispute.

The bearded against the beardless

The House of Saud persistently retains its adherence to Wahhabism, a puritanical trend of Sunnite Islam, which gives a literal interpretation of the Koran. In the opinion of the royal family, the Wahhabist zeal unites the heterogeneous tribes of Saudi Arabia. Today Wahhabism means considerably more than a sect or religious trend. It is a lifestyle on which the Saudi establishment is based.

When the Gulf crisis gave an impetus to changes in Saudi Arabia, local "patriots" stood up in defence of the customs. These bearded people – matawains – are united in the committee for the promotion of virtue and prevention of vice. Matawains watch over a strict observance of the Sharia in all spheres of life. Extremists from among Wahhabists call for the execution of the beardless, that is,

War or no war a prayer has to be said five times a day

those who advocate the separation of Islam from the state. Even top officials in the upper echelons of power are afraid of matawains to some extent. For instance, matawains have forbidden members of the government to borrow money from banks at interest, for usury is banned by the Islamic law, and the government had to give in.

Foreigners are also kept under the vigilant eye of the committee for the promotion of virtue and prevention of vice. The bearded "patriots" burst into hotels and severely punish those who drink spirits. Religious fanatics succeeded in having a women's tennis tournament repealed in Riyadh. The leaders of one oil company were compelled to cancel a reception to which men and women had been invited.

On the face of it, the kingdom remains a pillar of conservatism. However, feelings are running high in Saudi Arabia. Religious extremists and pro-Western liberals are engaged in an uncompromising war against each other. They are trying to win Fahd over to their side. Fundamentalists are organized better than others. Besides, they have the support of Muslim groups in various countries, from Algeria to Sudan. Liberals have no one to count on. The Americans do not want changes in the political scene of Saudi Arabia, remembering the upshot of the modernization policy in neighbouring Iran in the 1970s. Riyadh did not forget the words of the American President. The United States, he said, waged the war in Kuwait not for establishing democracy in that country but for restoring its sovereignty.

Washington is deeply grateful to the House of Saud, which has throughout its history rendered invaluable services to the United States. In the 1960s the unusual coalition of Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Israel jointly financed the operations of British troops in "Marxist" Yemen and ensured military supplies for them. In the 1970s Riyadh allocated dozens of millions of dollars for Washington's secret programme of aid to Nicaraguan contras. In the 1980s Saudi Arabia was the first Arab country to condemn the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, and since then Riyadh has regularly supplied arms to the Afghan mujahedin. Today the House of Saud is financing the CIA's secret operations in Iraq.

In short, inasmuch as Saudi Arabia is the largest supplier of oil to the United States and Washington's "most loyal" friend in the Middle East the White House gives preference to the stability of the stagnant regime rather than unpredictable democracy.

Women in the forefront

Nevertheless, the Saudi authorities proved unable to stem the process of democratization. Women were the first to begin the struggle for democracy. On November 6, 1990, a group of 47 women drove their cars along the streets of Riyadh. The purpose of this action, a rare instance of public protest in the kingdom, was to make the king allow women to drive cars. Why can't women drive a car? In the opinion of reverend Muslim scholars, ulemas, this can make them more independent and will weaken the family, which is regarded by Muslims as the pivot of a happy and stable society. Before this action all female drivers were stopped by policemen. Women were taken to their fathers or husbands while the cars were delivered to their homes by chauffeurs.

Events developed in the following way. The working women were immediately fired (incidentally, they had no contacts with men in their workplaces). In the mosques they were accused of prostitution while matawains demanded the death penalty for them. After that the higher Islamic authorities of Saudi Arabia passed a religious verdict (fetva) prohibiting women to drive cars in the territory of the kingdom.

However, the fetva did not meet with unanimous approval. Discontent was smouldering, and not only among women. King Fahd intervened in the affair by inviting the women to his palace. As a strict but condescending father, he told the women that he should punish them, as he would have punished his daughters, but decided to be indulgent to them. In short, the women were slightly rebuked and reinstated in their jobs. But they did not receive a driving licence.

These events awakened men to activity. Having broken almost a century-long silence, 43 Saudis addressed an open letter to the king. True, it was published not in Saudi Arabia but in Egypt. However, xerox copies of the letter quickly spread throughout the kingdom. It contained a number of classical democratic demands: protection of human rights (for women too), restriction of the authority of the clergy, liberalization of the press, and the formation of consultative bodies at every level of power. The aim of the reformers was to turn Saudi Arabia into "a modern Islamic state." This gave rise to a new spiral in the argument between the conservatives and modernizers. King Fahd had to face a far from easy choice.

Majlis al-Shura

The choice was made in favour of reforms. In February, the security bodies of Saudi Arabia arrested 20 ulemas accused of undermining "the stability of society." This wave of arrests was an entirely unusual thing in the country known for its strict observance of the Islamic laws. It took the religious authorities unawares because they were convinced of their absolute impunity. In the best traditions of Wahhabism, one of the militant preachers received 20 lashings in public for labelling as "a brothel" the Women's Revival Association, which includes many feminists from prominent Saudi families. Radicals rose in defence of "educated and working Saudi women." Gen. Rahman al-Sheikh, head of the chief state security board, threatened the Islamic fundamentalists with severe punishment unless they stop undermining "civil peace" in the kingdom.

In March, after careful preparations, Fahd announced his unprecedented decision. A consultative body, Majlis al-Shura, is to be formed in the country. The body, intended to share power with the monarch, will consist of 61 people. All of them will be appointed by the head of state with a four-year term of office.

The political reform also provides for the introduction of a fundamental law, Saudi Arabia's first constitution based on the principles of the Sharia. The fundamental law naturally leaves unchanged the situation under which royal power is the prerogative of the House of Saud.

Lastly, Fahd issued a decree which decentralizes the administration of the kingdom by transferring many powers to local government bodies.

The guardian of Islam's two holiest shrines obviously gave priority to the throne, not the Crescent. He is possibly inspired by the example of his father, Abd al-Aziz, who did not hesitate to sever the alliance with the Wahhabist ulemas when they tried to ignore his authority.

Photos from the Time magazine (USA)

"Dream about the Karelian lakes"

Does *New Times* have it correct?

New Times made an important step towards the establishment of sincere and open relations between two peoples in a very ticklish and important matter, when it published an article by Pentti Virrankoski. I have in mind the fate of the Finnish territory, which was illegally seized from us by the Stalin regime under the Molotov-Ribbentrop Treaty.

However, in Alexander Polyukhov's commentary, almost the only thing that can be considered a step in the right direction is the acknowledgement that the new treaty between Russia and Finland doesn't exclude the possibility of the peaceful reviewing of the border according to the principles of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Polyukhov asserts that only an insignificant portion of the Finns share the opinion of Prof. Virrankoski. He comes to this conclusion, based on the fact that this question is not included in the platforms of any of the parties represented in parliament.

However, the data of a recent public opinion poll conducted by Finnish TV is as follows: 54 percent of those polled think that the question about Russia returning the seized territory should be raised immediately; 7 percent think this question should be raised, but a bit later.

In the postwar years, I tried to analyze the passivity and obedience of the Finns in this and other questions involving the relations with Russia and the former Soviet Union. I have published articles in many papers and magazines, and not long ago also a book about the development and state of the Finnish national consciousness today. The last few years the number of articles in papers touching on the necessity of reestablishing justice and the possibility for Finland to be again a single entity, embracing territories where only Finns have lived for thousands of years, has grown sharply.

The Tartu Movement for Peace has existed since March 1990. I am one of its founders and the chairman. We have talked to the members of the Finnish parliament and organized demonstrations when Gorbachev first came to Finland, as well as when he met with Bush there.

Polyukhov's assertion that the Karelians living in Finland are not Finns is a crude confusion of ideas. The territories which we acknowledge as having become part of the Soviet Union according to the Paris Treaty of 1947, and Eastern Karelia which adjoined the borders of our country from 1920 to 1940 are not the same thing at all. We only claim the territories which Finland gave threatened by a further Soviet invasion, but not Eastern Karelia. It's another matter that around 100,000 people speaking Finnish and related languages live there (these questions are always being confused, especially in Russia). Of course, we sympathize with the desire of the population of Eastern Karelia to obtain elementary political and cultural rights. Soviet Russia solemnly promised Karelia autonomy according to the conditions of the Tartu Peace Treaty of 1920, but the promise was broken. So the rhetorical appeal of Alexander Polyukhov to the Finnish people to demand the autonomy for the Karelians in the Finnish borders is absurd and shows a complete lack of knowledge of the matter. The Karelians living in Finland are Finns, one of the Finnish peoples with its own local dialect and other cultural distinctions. A significant portion of Finnish Karelians have settled all over Finland after the annexation of Finnish Karelia by the Soviet Union. At that time, 430 thousand Finns had to leave their native parts.

Polyukhov expresses the fear that raising the question about the border in the current situation could lead to the further weakening of the political and military position of Russia. If you take a closer look this is disputable. Is it right to call the transformation of the USSR into the CIS, with all the ensuing consequences, a "weakening"? Don't these changes spell the shift from a dictatorial regime to a democracy and concern about justice and equal rights for nations? In expressing his fear, Polyukhov forgets that the USSR of Stalin's time, with its population 50 times greater than that of Finland, used the "weakness" of Finland and attacked it.

I appeal to the readers of *New Times:* Let's begin a dialogue and not be in a rush — that could lead to hasty conclusions. I am convinced that if we act thus, we can set an example for the world.

I really do lay a lot of hope on establishing a Russo-Finnish dialogue. And I cordially wish you success down your thorny path. It will be difficult and demand great courage. As I write these lines, I feel a flood of warmth towards you in my chest — and I am getting that feeling for the first time in my life.

Martti Siirala

HELSINKI

Drawing from Hufvudstadsbladet (Finland)

EXCLUSIVE FOR NEW TIMES

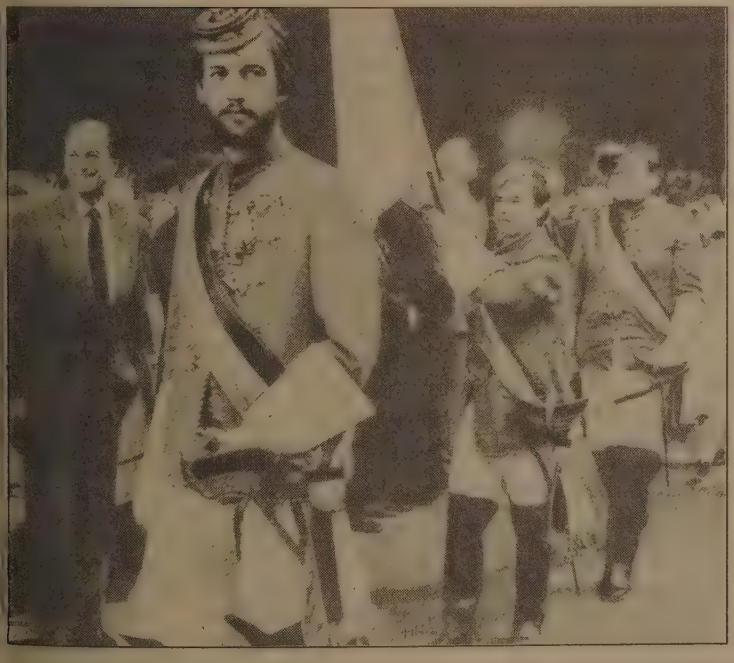
Got as far as a corporal, never was a Nazi

Doctor **Herbert CZAJA,** Chairman of the West-German Union of the Expellees, was a favourite target for the Soviet press. Generations of Soviet journalists specializing in foreign affairs used to practice on this target, calling Herbert Czaja a "dyed-in-the-wool militant conservative," "forever a man of the past," and "arch-revanchist." The subject was always a cinch with the Soviet press, because the Union of the Expellees consistently objected against the contemporary European border pattern and continued to regard Germany "within the 1937 borders," demanding reunification of the FRG and the GDR.

Now Herbert Czaja comes to Moscow to attend a congress of the ex-USSR's ethnic Germans – who are also being expelled in some sense – and gives an interview to *New Times*'s political analyst **Konstantin Isakov.**

New Times. As relations between Germany and the USSR (and now Russia) are radically changing, Russians continue to regard your Union as a rightist menace.

Herbert Czaja. That attitude, typical of the Marxist-Leninist past, must be abandoned. Russians are evidently oblivious to the Charter of the German Expellees adopted in August 1950 in Stuttgart, which clearly proclaims that Germans expelled from the East resign from seeking revenge and retribution and pledge involvement into the process of reconstructing Europe.



Flags of the Upper Silesia displayed to the beat of the drum: an attempt to preserve the culture and tradition, or a "sabbath of those who are always people of the past"?

Since 1970 (incidentally, the year since which I have been heading the Union), we have proceeded from the following principles: there can be no return to the past, but the present mustn't be left unchanged. We are searching for a compromise decision. Some regions are irretrievably lost for us; however, the German influence can be restored in certain other areas if we develop ethnic minorities' rights and self-government. Incidentally, the governments of the USA and the UK demanded, at the 1947 conferences, restoration of the international status of Upper Silesia and return of Lower Silesia and Pomerania to Germany. (Though this plan never materialized because of the USSR's stance on the issue, the Union continues to regard certain western and southern Polish provinces as Germany's eastern territories. – **K.I.**)

Free manifestation of the will of the population of the territories between Poland and Germany could determine their status as independent autonomies. The areas in question could be turned into states like Belgium or Luxemburg. Representation of Poles and Germans in bodies of self-government could be proportional, after the mode of Cyprus or Lebanon.

There are several large cities between Germany and Poland, some of which can remain Polish and others can become German, and Stettin (Polish Szczecin – **K.I.**) may become a free "Hanseatic" city. The issue was discussed by the GDR and Poland in the past.

N.T. What you say now can be taken for a call to revise the results of WWII and bring about a new *Drag nach Osten.*

H.C. It's far from my idea. Ever since 1970, I've been reiterating the need for a negotiated compromise. Had the German government seriously discussed the issue with Gorbachev, there could have been a positive result. Horst Teltschik (Chancellor Helmut Kohl's former aide for matters of foreign policy. – **K.I.**) told in his recent book, *392 Days,* how in November and December of 1989 Gorbachev demanded delivery of meat and huge credits from Germany. In my opinion, we could have come to agreement with Gorbachev on certain other issues as well then. After all, the shift of the Polish-German border by some 50 kilometres eastwards or westwards would make no difference. But the present agreements, including the 2+4 agreement (about the German reunification – **I.K.**) contain lapses.

First, they don't mention the right to self-determination for Germans living outside Germany. Second, they only confirm the existing borders rather than recognize and determine them (this lapse was criticized by Czechs as well). The same objection is applicable to the FRG-USSR agreement mentioning only inviolability of the borders and registering the absence of mutual territorial claims.

I believe that we will see a merger of all European states even in this century. This would be necessary also for curbing the environmental pollution to the east of the Oder-Neisse border, for example, in the Upper Silesia, where cities are suffocating because of heavily polluted air. Incidentally, there are 800,000 ethnic Germans among the population of the Upper Silesia now. They and the Polish population speak out for the European option in solution of the issue.

Germany is experiencing a strong drive for revival of national awareness. If this popular sentiment doesn't get caught up and properly channelled by a major respectable political party (as it happened in the times of Konrad Adenauer and Kurt Schumacher), the outcome can be disastrous: radicalism can seep to the extremities of the political spectrum.

N.T. Redrawing borders and upholding territorial claims is always prone to disaster. Think about Nagorny Karabakh and Yugoslavia.

H.C. Russia must allow its ethnic minorities to exercise their rights. The same is topical for the Upper Silesia, the Oder-Neisse strip, Croatia and Serbia. Similar regions also exist in Italy, France and Great Britain. German schools and German mass media can help avoid assimilation of the German minority.

The start should be made on the international level. I mean the Human Dimension of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. The process should be financed by states, in accordance with special bilateral interstate agreements to be made.

N.T. You often mention the Upper Silesia which is currently divided between several Polish provinces.

H.S. I was born there in 1914, and worked as an academic assistant at Krakow University.

N.T. However, this didn't save you from being drafted into the German army.

H.C. I fought on the Eastern Front and was wounded. In 1944, I returned to the frontlines, this time in the West, and was captured by advancing US troops. I spent some time in a POW camp in southern France.

N.T. What was your last military rank?

H.C. I was a corporal when I was captured. I never joined the National Socialist Labour Party and therefore couldn't rise high in a military career.

N.T. Do you mean to say that you were not politically minded before the war?

H.C. But I was. I was a member of the German Christian People's Party which chose not to adopt the ideology which became official in 1933 and therefore was banned soon afterwards. I learned the awful facts about Germany's life from the press, because at that time I was a student of German philology in Vienna and a member of the local Catholic association calling themselves Logos. While in Austria, I got in the midst of serious clashes between Christian circles and National Socialists.

The position of the 77-year-old Herbert Czaja, President of the West German Union of Expellees, is criticized not only by Germany's leftist journalists. Hartmut Koszik, 32, resigned from his post of the Union's Secretary General because of differences in assessment of the German-Polish agreements (on the right)

N.T. Soon after WWII, millions of German residents of regions to the east of the Neisse and the Oder were forced into Germany which was divided into occupation zones. How was that done?

H.C. I was still in that camp when the resettlement started. In 1946, I was allowed home but not for long: all Germans were used as forced labour. I was dispatched to work for a Polish peasant. I was young, only 31. But my parents had a harder lot: several other families were moved to their house in which my parents were allowed to occupy only one room. They refused to resettle to the west, into the occupation zones. My father was blind and needed constant help. Mother served six weeks in prison for the refusal to resettle. While in prison, she got pneumonia and died soon after release.

The Sudetenland Germans had the worst lot of all: they were driven off right after the Soviet troops took over Czechoslovakia. The same happened in Eastern Prussia, where Soviet troops treated the local civilian population rather harshly. In Czechoslovakia and Poland, Germans were sent to coal mines. Many were tortured and killed without trial. According to different assessments, between two and three million Germans died after WWII as a result.

N.T. Could you describe your "new lease on life" in the western parts?

H.C. In 1946, I arrived to Hanover and then to Stuttgart, with a group of other WWII veterans. There, I got a job as a high school teacher, the work I knew well. Since 1947, I was repeatedly elected to the local community council as a representative of the expellees. I did my best to live up to it and helped other expellees who remained in resettlers' camps. I and a pal of mine made a home in a blitzed ruin of a school: we used abandoned tables and benches to make a kind of a hut.

We faced unemployment which was high among the resettlers from the east.

Of course, the anti-Polish and anti-Czech sentiment was strong among the expelled. Still many of us were prepared to cooperate.

N.T. So, the expelled started a fight for their rights.

H.C. Exactly. But they started from scratch. They needed recognition from local Germans if they wanted not to remain second-rate people.

N.T. However, not everyone in the Federal Republic approves of the Union. The press is often full of harsh criticism.

H.C. It is the leftist press.

N.T. I notice that not only leftist journalists share a certain dislike for your cause.

H.C. You can't speak here in terms of like and dislike: we are two million people, the Union of Expellees. Sure enough, some of our demands may be not to everyone's liking. But then again, those who speak out the truth are seldom liked. In fact, our cultural events attract hundreds of thousands.

N.T. In the mid-1980s, the German and the Soviet press published many strongly-worded opinions about the "cultural events" staged by the expelled. Why should you antagonize the public?

H.C. I get the point. In the first post-war years, the Christian Democratic leader, Konrad Adenauer, and Kurt Schumacher of Social Democrats tried to

he expelled have long since settled down in Germany and become respectable people. How-ver, they and their children won't forget the expatriation in 1945

utdo each other on the national issue. oth supported and thought highly of us. lowever, the SDP changed its course and egan to speak vilely of us. In 1969, Willy randt was elected Federal Chancellor, and an official pronouncement addressed the spellees issue in a tone very different from at he used to speak about it in the 1960s, hen he was in the opposition. The Free emocratic Party didn't particularly sup-ort us ever. The CDU shared our position ntil 1970-72, when the majority of Christ-n Democrats distanced themselves from ur cause. Perhaps that was due to the con-usion of a series of agreements with Mos-ow and Warsaw, achieved by the Brandt dministration. However, when new agree-ents with Moscow about the borders were scussed recently, 23 Bundestag deputies om the CDU/CSU bloc voted against. I as one of them.

N.T. They surely must have been the eople who are still acutely aware of WWII ıd postwar calamities. But who are the esent-day members of your Union?

H.C. They are quite diverse people, actu-ly. For example, the association of Transyl-ınian Saxons has recently had a shot of fresh ood by recent resettlers from Romania, and ow there are many young people among its embers. The Sudetenland Germans have a rge youth organization, the same is true out associations of Germans from the pper Silesia and Eastern Prussia. However, e associations of former German residents Lithuania and Bessarabia are composed of ainly the older generations.

N.T. But members of your youth organizations were born in Germany, weren't they? Their native country is somewhere near Elbe or Rhine. What do they care about the native lands of their ancestors?

H.C. The lands in question were worked and lived on by their ancestors for the past seven centuries. Now it's time to build bridges.

N.T. Do you mean to say that you no longer demand revision of the borders?

H.C. Change of borders can be avoided in many cases, however, not in all cases. But then it has to be peacefully negotiated.

If the majority of people in, for example, the Upper Silesia, opt for the status of an internationally-governed territory, it can be negotiated. German autonomous ethnicities can become a solution for other areas, for example, Hungary, Romania, Russia and certain other CIS republics.

N.T. Herr Czaja, you are now in Russia, but have you ever revisited your native land of the Upper Silesia?

H.C. My children visited there. I have private invitations from there, but I'm waiting for an official one from the Polish government.

N.T. Would you like to go and live there?

H.C. Only when the conditions are favourable. I mean availability of German schooling for children and sufficiently many Germans around. The right for repatriation can be exercized only step by step.

Photos from Der Spiegel (Germany)

The Union of Expellees

The Union emerged in 1949 and rallies people who previously lived in lands which were part of Germany before WWII, as well as ethnic Germans who lived in parts of Eastern Europe. 12.7 million ethnic Germans were expelled from their native lands there in 1945-46, in keeping with the accords reached at the Potsdam Conference. According to the 1950 data, 8.1 million of them went to live in the FRG, 4.1 million to the GDR, and 0.5 million to Austria and elsewhere.

The organization unites 22 associations of Germans stemming from the same country: the Baltics, Banat, Bukovina, Danzig, Dobruja, Bulgaria, Yugoslavian Danube areas, Slovakian, Carpathians, Lithuania, Upper and Lower Silesia, Eastern Prussia, Pomerania, Russia, Satmar (north-western Romania), Transylvania, Sudetenland, Hungary, Vistula and Warta areas near Poznan, and Western Prussia.

According to a 1953 law, not only those who actually lived east of the Oder and Neisse until 1945, but also their children and grandchildren were to be regarded as the expelled and expatriated. Today, the Union of Expellees numbers two million members from 20 million Germans qualifying for the category of the expelled. The federal budget annually gives the Union about DM40 m for cultural purposes and its publications.

The Union has its representatives in the Bundestag among the CDU/CSU faction (though they can't seriously influence Germany's political life).

The Union's functionaries don't wish to give up claims to 140,000 sq. kilometres of "traditionally German land," negatively react to Germany's treaties with its East European neighbours and ignore German politicians' appeals to acknowledge the Oder-Neisse border. Still, this stubborn unwillingness to accept the *status quo* shouldn't be taken as revanchism. It is rather an expression of their nostalgia for the native land where their ancestors lay buried, and bitterness for national socialism.

Why do we have such a heavy cross to bear?

or why the Russians are not a God-chosen people

Yuri Furmanov

Now that thousands upon thousands of our compatriots are leaving Russia for the prosperous West, one can occasionally spot a ragged and ill-shaven "Russian great-power chauvinist" climbing out of his rickety old cabin and shaking his fist at them: "Just you wait!"

Lest the reader should think that the title of this article is overly pretentious, let me explain, to start with, that what follows is not a theological or metaphysical treatise on the fate and historical predestination of Russia.

The question asked in the title should be interpreted like this: why has history been so harsh to the Russians?

Russia is not in God's good graces

How could great Russia humiliate itself to the extent of receiving aid from the "less developed countries" of the Third World – aid, which Russians queue and fight for? This shocking situation can be seen not only on store shelves, but on the standard of analytical thinking, with democrats cursing communists, hardliners tongue-lashing democrats, and the people hating both. At the same time, all are unhappy about the Soviet period in the history of Russia, as if before that period Russia was a "perfect" country.

Remarkably, every time Russia was plunged into another cataclysm, be it famine or pestilence, a rebellion, a war, a revolution, or a *perestroika,* the people who survived it thought that their cataclysm was a very special one and that if its causes were ascertained and Leo Tolstoi's question of "What happens next?" answered, a "paradise on earth" would come. Somehow the "bright future," and its bright-coloured pictures painted by official myth-makers, never materialized with a wave of a wand; instead, more cataclysms followed one another in endless succession.

As we are going through another cataclysm today, the history of Russsia, going back a thousand years, ought to teach us something so that the current reform be the last in the series of trying experiments which have exhausted the Russians physically and morally. This does not happen, however, and for the umpteenth time now our reformers and media start looking for the immediate causes of our troubles. We have got really tired of waiting for the "radiant future," and want no more "catastroikas"; why not, then, rise above our reality and ask the major question: why is it that Russia has never had "good luck" in its domestic affairs?

There is no denying, of course, that other nations have not been "lucky" all along, either, and Russia has also had its share of "good luck" in its history. But neither is there denying the well-known fact that Russia's repeated attempts to overtake and overcome European nations invariably ended in its regress. Does not this fact give us enough grounds to ask today, at the turn of the 21st century, an eschatological question: why is God so unmerciful to the Russians, why doesn't He stir a finger to help us? Russian Orthodox preachers say that the predi-

:ament we are now in is retribution for atheism, that our country is now a purgatory of sorts. But why, then, was God unmerciful to pre-revolutionary Russia, too, which had fervently prayed to Him and which followed all His behests?

"New Israel" never came

Did atheism become so widely spread in the country for the reason that despite the Russians' love for and devotion to Him, God has never made them a "chosen" and "salutary" nation.

In the 19th century, many thought that the Creator had reserved a humanistic global mission for Russia.

Russia was seen as a "new Israel," original Israel being the first country to have been distinguished by God for the sufferings and faith of its people. The Russian Orthodox Church, which tried in every way to stand out in the eyes of God, created a veritable cult of suffering in Russia: the fact that our nation suffered more than any other was taken by it as a sure sign of Russia having been selected by God for a global mission or, to quote Chaadayev, "for answering the questions that are preying on people's minds."

The "leap" in Russian ideology from the idea of the Russian people being "God-forsaken" to it being "God-chosen" was, as always, impetuous and seemed irreversible. Even after the ruinous revolution of 1917, the faith in Russia being a "God-chosen" country, far form waning, was gradually filled with new "prophetic" mythology. Whereas the Bolsheviks gave it the form of a history-making mission of the proletariat, their opponents transformed it into the heroic faith in Russia becoming the ruler of the world rather than perishing along with the Bolsheviks. These hopes are obviously based on the "Great Russians' national pride" alone.

The question of whether the idea of Russia's "messianic exclusiveness" added to, or distracted from, the Russians' quality of life didn't make much difference either to the Bolsheviks or even to many religious or liberal jingoists. Fortunately, the talk about the great, epoch-making mission of Russia has now quietened down a little after the Bolsheviks' abortive experiment, although some of our neo-Slavophiles, or neo-monarchists, or those gnawed by "Memory", are inspired by missionary mythology now and again.

Even a patriot like Solzhenitsyn came to realize in his *How we should make up Russia* that "it is time we stopped reiterating, parrot-like, that we are proud of being Russian, proud of our vast country, proud of... We have to face the fact that we forfeited all we had been justly proud of for succumbing to the moral catastrophe of 1917 (or more accurately, of 1915-1932); since then, we have become pitifully unlike our old selves, and shouldn't make grandiose plans for the future." While sharing his idea on how to revive Russia, the great writer still pins hopes on God: "Rather than feeling proud, we ought to pray to God for recovery and common sense."

What if God denies us His help again?

Which nation should be regarded as chosen?

This time I mean not the nations chosen by God to fulfil a special mission, but those He bestowes His blessings upon. Here we come to the following question: "Why is our common God, equally open to prayers for mercy from all individuals, so selective when it comes to the fate of nations and states?" Is it at all possible to find out the criteria He goes by in patronizing others, now more prosperous nations, so as to try and secure His support for Russia and the Russians?

How are we to find out these criteria? After all, no mortal – including Augustinus and Avvakum – have ever succeeded in penetrating the "inscrutable ways of Providence."

Nevertheless, there do exist means of gaining this knowledge. These means are "hope."

The former means, as already mentioned, have proved futile in Russia, although many believers and even atheists in despair hang on to it. What's more, it is precisely in times of crises, quite frequent in the history of Russia, that prayers and humble expectations of miracles, "miraculous cures" were believed to be the only way to win Almighty's favours.

Exhausted by the "social experiments of Bolshevism," by war, by *perestroika,* by price liberalization, many in Russia hope that God will change his mind and help us out of crisis before we tailspin into the chaos of moral and physical mutual destruction. It is not for nothing that the Russian Church is rising from the ashes so quickly and that its pastors' counsel and guidance are being much sought after.

Nevertheless, religiousness will hardly take firm root among Russians, whatever faith they belong to. The force of doubt is too great: we have been expecting Heaven to give us peace and prosperity for a thousand years, but our hopes (I mean the hopes of the people as a whole) have never come true.

Personal faith and personal hopes are something else again: they have yielded, and are still yielding fruit, but the "people's faith" will hardly ever revive: it has brought the Russian people too much trouble and

suffering. At the end of the 20th century, we cannot really regard suffering as a sure sign of our being "a God-chosen people" again. Let us leave that to other peoples, if any, or to God-chosen individuals. As to the "God-chosen peoples," we are certain that these are prosperous, rather than suffering ones.

Catch the West's fancy to catch God's

Hence, another way to find out the criteria whereby God helps peoples – the way of experience, of studying and imitating the nations which have been "chosen" in the above-mentioned sense. Russia has embarked upon this way in earnest, I hope.

Widely popular now are magical words like "profit," "success," "comfort," "human rights," "private property," "convertible," "sex," "commercials." Demand for brokers and business managers is growing steadily, various "self-improvement" courses, new universities and colleges are mushrooming. Russia is beginning to change over to representative democracy based on free elections, from power as a source of money and wealth to money and wealth as a means of gaining power and influence.

The secondary school right across the road from my house now proudly calls itself a college, almost without any changes made in its teaching staff or student body.

Is it enough to "borrow" from the West – the "Magnificent Seven" – or at least from Eastern Europe the attributes of a "good life" to qualify for God's favours.

Many of our "democrats" in high and not so high places think that imitating the West is now the only way of gaining favour with God so that He should help us become a prosperous country, too. But there is no cheating God: He can always distinguish between the truth and a lie, authenticity from mimicry, creative work from pot-boiling, a face from a mask. To catch the West's fancy does not mean to catch God's. God always gives short names to me. It is necessary, of course, to learn from the experience of the prosperous nations, but it is up to the Russians themselves to find their own road to prosperity.

God promises nothing to us the way the God-pleasing Big Seven do. He will help us when we make an effort to climb out of the mess on our own, because He, too, is interested in deeds, not mere words.

Such is, probably, the logic of Providence: the Almighty helps those who help themselves, who work for their own

salvation or, at least, for their confidence of salvation. He is, probably, interested not in what the people believe in, what they can do, what they feel, know, and what they hope for, but in how they live and act. There has been a lot of talk about the potential of "Great Russia," about all the things it can do, but Almighty is in all probability, not much interested in that. Judging by the prosperous nations, He is obviously more given to realism and pragmatism than to idealistic rhetoric.

Russia will never rule the world

Hence, the third and much more reliable way of earning God's good will: to start with. Russia ought to get rid, fast, of its useless and groundless myths deeply rooted in the Russian public mind: one, that Great Russia, which will ultimately become, by magic, the ruler of the world; and the other, that Russia is damned to poverty, dirt, deception and disillusionment.

There isn't much hope that Russia will rule the seven seas in a short time. As ever, tolerance is running out quickly, and, as ever also, the uncertain Russians have a feeling that another "advance" will be followed by another "rollback." I think that now they still fail to see, or would not admit, that all their troubles come neither from God, the Tsar, the State Emergency Committee, the parties, nor from politicians (although they are partly responsible for our plight), but from ourselves. If we do not realize this, and, along with our new authorities and our new press, lay all the blame for our position on the Communist regimes, on seventy-odd years of Soviet power, then we shall, once again, leave our one-thousand-year history out of account and, like Communist propaganda, we will trace the history of Russia back to the year 1917, and no earlier.

There's no use looking for reasons in some metaphysical "soul" of the people. Neither is there any use referring to Berdyayev's words to the effect that Russians are an enormous "elemental force" which does not very well lend itself to organization. The historian Sergei Solovyov wrote that the Russians were given to aimless and unbounded displays of "courage," "revelry" and "daring," while Leonid Abalkin, our contemporary, regards laziness as one of the most salient features of the Russian national character.

There is no reason to maintain that the Tatar-Mongol conquest and serfdom were to blame for most of Russia's troubles – after all, those events, like the October revolution, were secondary, rather than primary with regard to us. Today Russians ought to be particularly critical of themselves and their history. We should not look for excuses or shift all the blame

to the authorities or God. It is up to us to clean up the mess we are now in.

Professional mourners

There have always been and there will always be, guilty parties. In Russian history, taken as a whole, a no small proportion of the guilt for our misfortunes is born by the Orthodox Church. Our Russian Orthodox Church which has been zealously and successfully putting Christ's behests into practice and calling for love and accord for centuries, has somehow made it a practice, from time immemorial, of intervening into politics, soothing and praying not only for its parishioners, but also for the people at large, for the Motherland, for Russia, and even for its negligent rulers at times.

By preaching submission to fate and assuring the people that they were in God's good graces, the Church often lulled them into complacency and discouraged them from "helping themselves".

By inducing people to look to heaven for "God's grace," the Church often cultivated the harmful habit of waiting idly for favours from "above" – from the Tsar, landowners, chiefs. Doesn't fair amount of blame belong to the fact that it has always sought to identify itself with the nation, with the state? Wouldn't it have been better advised to leave every individual to address himself to God, as Protestantism has?

One can heap blame upon politicians and the authorities, old and new, but there is no neglecting the eulogy delivered by the people-worshipping intelligentsia. The compassionate speeches addressed by some Russian intellectuals to the people were so disheartening. Even the sober-minded men like the historian Klyuchevsky could not refrain from fruitless lamentations, like, "I am sorry for you, Russian thought, and for you, the Russian people! You are a kind of a naked creature a thousand years old, without a name, without heritage, without a future, without experience. You are like a girl without a dowry who is doomed to the disgraceful lot of waiting for a beneficial groom prepared to marry her – otherwise you will have to yield to the first buyer who will discard you later like a useless wornout rag. Now that they shout at the top of their voices, in any church and in any pub, 'God save the Tsar!', I feel like singing, crying out, under my breath: 'God, save my poor people, save Russia!'"

All over Russia, and outside it, a great many writers, deputies, journalists are mourning for the Russian people today. They keep lamenting over the uncertain and even gloomy future of Russia, over the "socially unprotected" groups (sounds quite touching); they are doing it either for money or just out of pity, and soothing the people again by "manna from heaven" in the shape of fantastic foreign aid. The more optimistic ones say: "It will all turn out right in the end." If Yeltsin doesn't help, God will; if God doesn't help, Bush will.

Now that we are trying to carry out reforms, which are our last hope, perhaps, of making life in Russia worthy of man, and which require vigour, strength and self-confidence, how can a Russian benefit from the following words by Rozanov, for example: "We have been patient for so long, our patience has seen us through the middle ages and it will see us through the new times. Let us be patient until everything clears up."

I am certain that lulling utopias and lachrymose prayers are socially useless and even harmful to Russia and the Russians now. What we need is not patience, which often leads to intolerance, but vigorous action without self-flagellation and self-delusion. And if it is true that the root of our troubles and sufferings lies in our mind, not in our life, then in order to release the energy of action, which alone can bring each of us personal success (and success is the main criterion of a nation's being in God's good graces), we have to rid our minds of the mythological fog of collective hopes, expectations and collective irresponsibility.

The Russians have been in what Lev Gumilyov would call an "emotionally weak state" – neither because they are under pressure from other ethnic groups, nor because they compare unfavourably with the "prosperous" nations: the reason lies elsewhere: while these nations were making small but practical steps towards prosperity and building efficient social structures cell by cell, the Russians were being fed with ideas of Great Russia's special predestination.

Drawing by Marat Tairov

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General Sudoplatov:

"Stalin had no intention of surrendering"

After we featured in our issue No. 13 the documentary "Did Stalin contemplate capitulation in 1941?", Pavel Sudoplatov, one of the principal figures involved in the events described, granted us an interview. On July 25, 1941, Beria told him to liaise with the Bulgarian Ambassador to Moscow and convey through him to Hitler an offer to negotiate peace. True, General Sudoplatov prefers another version

Pavel Sudoplatov in 1943

New Times. Why were you told to do that?

Pavel Sudoplatov. Not because I was Beria's trusted agent as you make me out to be. It was because I was then deputy chief of the First (intelligence) Directorate of the NKVD. Beria also knew well that I had long had systematic and close contacts with the Bulgarian Ambassador Ivan Stamenov.

N.T. Did you establish those contacts in Moscow?

P.S. No, long before that, before he had come to Moscow in the summer of 1940. Beria emphasized when talking to me that we should not "barter Stamenov for peanuts." Let me add that at that time in July, Beria himself had wanted to meet the ambassador, but Molotov had categorically objected and had said that only a man in constant contact with the ambassador should meet him.

I had to tell Stamenov, as if speaking my own mind, that it was felt in Moscow it would still not be too late to make a peaceful settlement to the conflict that had broken out between Germany and the Soviet Union. This, I was to inform him, could be done through territorial concession.

N.T. Was the idea one of actual surrender?

P.S. Not at all. I categorically disagree with that interpretation! The idea was to disinform the Germans, so as to check the offensive and further advance of fascist troops and thus enable the Soviet government to manoeuvre and gain time. That is actually what Beria wanted, for us to win time.

N.T. And so you put all that to Stamenov for him to relay the matters further to Berlin, but he refused to do that?

P.S. It wasn't like that at all! Beria had told me not to authorize Stamenov to relay all that to the Germans.

N.T. What was to be done, then?

P.S. The idea was for him to take the initiative, but he didn't . Our deciphering service eavesdropped on embassy transmissions and found that no message had been sent to Sofia on the score at all. I think that typical of sounding out matters for intelligence purposes.

As for Stalin, I don't think he had panicked at all. As I remember, before the war yet, we had reported to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, proceeding from a very well informed German source, that according to Hans von Sekt,

Bulgarian Tsar Boris III and Hitler. Was he to convey Stalin's offer to the Führer?

the founding father of the Reichswehr, the Germans would lose the war, if they did not take Moscow, Leningrad and Kiev in the matter of three or four weeks. Stalin ordered the General Staff to be put in the picture, for which purpose generals Vasilevsky and Golikov called on us. We told them that the Germans had planned the war to take no more than two or three months and that, consequently, it was for us to hold out that long.

N.T. But what about Zhukov's information? He claimed that in October 1941, Stalin had given Beria a similar directive to liaise with the Bulgarians and sound out the possibility of a "second Brest peace."

P.S. I think Zhukov was mistaken. He must have confused things. The Blitzkrieg had been spiked and we had achieved our basic objective. Why did you say the way to Moscow was, to all practical intents, open? That is wrong.

N.T. Documents from the 1953 Beria case directly indicate that negotiations were being carried behind the government's back.

P.S. You must realize how things stood when Beria was investigated. The 1941 contacts were discussed at a meeting of the Central Committee Presidium on August 6, 1953. I was also summoned and reported on my meeting with Stamenov. I added that Molotov had known about that.

At the time Khrushchev and Malenkov assured me that I was not to be held culpable, but they did not keep their promise, evidently because they did not want to have an awkward witness of their contacts with Beria. I was repressed. One charge laid was that of involvement in separate negotiations. I had that charge rescinded by a special commission only in 1968.

Interviewer: **Lev Bezymensky**

Bordell GmbH

Berlin prostitutes are ready to stand up for themselves in court

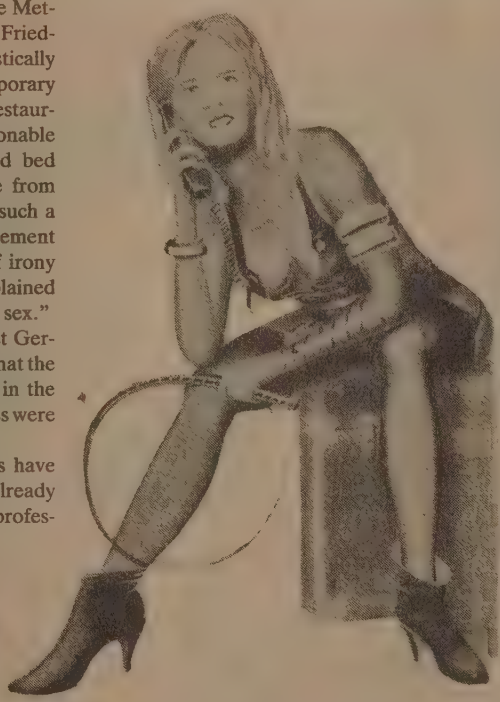
Judging from the official documents, when the Berlin Wall existed, and West Berlin and East Germany were separated, there was no prostitution in the former East Germany. The workers were persistently fulfilling and overfulfilling the production plan and didn't think about forbidden pleasures. However, in reality sin turned out to be greater than socialism.

In the summer of 1977, the foreign correspondents stationed in Berlin, including the correspondent for *New Times,* were invited to the opening ceremony of the Metropol Hotel in the centre of town on Friedrichstrasse. The manager enthusiastically talked about the truly fine contemporary building, and showed us the halls, restaurants and rooms. In one of the fashionable deluxe rooms a special large round bed caught the attention of a colleague from TASS and he naively asked: "Why such a strange bed?" The manager in amazement and, it seemed to me, with a bit of irony looked at our correspondent and explained in a businesslike manner: "For group sex."

Knowing the situation then in East Germany, it could be said with certainty that the authorities knew about such rooms in the Metropol. The Communist authorities were not always consistent in their bans.

Only a little more than two years have passed since the fall of the Wall and already 500 officially registered East Berlin professionals have filled out the ranks of West Berlin prostitutes. Up until the unification of the two Germanys, the priestesses of love worked along two streets secretly set aside for them: Potsdamer Strasse and Kurfürstenstrasse. Now they have also taken over Oranienburger Strasse in the centre of East Berlin where each evening 50 "night butterflies" come out. Thousands work on other streets and in red light houses in Berlin.

According to police data, 10 brothels are already registered in the Pankow, Prenzlauer Berg, Friedrichshain and Mitte districts in the eastern part of the city. The owner of two of them as well as a sex shop is a fellow countryman of ours, who emigrated several years ago. There is no strict division any longer between West Berlin and East Berlin ladies of the night: all of them quickly mixed together. A member of the police department involved in the fight against organized crime, Andreas Reinhardt, claimed that the majority of pimps and prostitutes had come to Oranienburger Strasse from West Berlin.



Actually many of the pimps are former citizens of East Germany who have done time and were sent to West Germany for a certain sum of money transferred from there to an account of the East Berlin authorities.

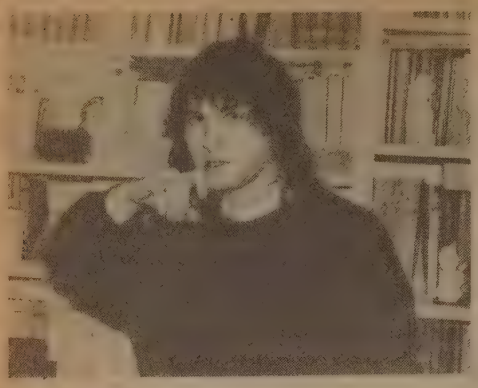
The police feel that this crowd conduct themselves quite decently: they don't force themselves on anybody and don't deal in narcotics. Therefore, so far the inhabitants of Oranienburger Strasse aren't protesting and the authorities don't intend to interfere. "We've got the situation under control," says the assistant Bürgermeister of the Mitte district, Volkrad Kuhn, "there's no reason for concern." But after 1995 the prostitutes will evidentally have to clear out of this street. The synagogue there is being restored and the city's Jewish commune doesn't intend to let things stand as they are.

In the meantime, the first brothel collectively owned and run by those who work there will soon open in Berlin. The members of the local association of professional prostitutes, Hydra, are tired of paying the pimps. They intend to establish a joint-stock company with limited responsibility, Bordell GmbH, with an authorized capital of 50,000 marks. The shareholders will each make a contribution of 500 marks.

Curiously the official registration of the firm would mean the legalization of a trade against the law in Germany. However the initiators of the Bordell GmbH are determined to make the profession of a prostitute respectable, and are ready to battle for their project even in court. In their words, "it's a matter of the honour of the most worthy profession in the world."

Boris Lysenko,
New Times correspondent

BERLIN



Alexander Knyazev, a 30-year-old cellist, says he went to Pretoria with the single purpose of taking a look at South Africa. He did not see even a hundredth part of that country, but won the first prize. However, Knyazev did not play cunning. He was indeed little concerned about winning a prize. The cellist scored his main victory in 1986, when he had returned to the scene after six years of absence from the musical world.

Doctors told him that he had a muscle disease: "It's not the most terrible case. Nothing threatens your life. But you will be uanble to play." Contrary to the doctors' verdict, Knyazev did not doubt that he would continue to play, and even in the days of despair he did not seriously think about an alternative occupation if the worst came to the worst.

Knyazev cannot stand competitions, but nevertheless participated in five of them. At that time, there was not a better means of achieving fame in the musical world and receiving good offers for concerts. Today it was necessary to prove that the artist, who had been given up by almost all his colleagues and admirers as a bad job, had to show that he now played better than before. Alexander was sure of his success. This is borne out by his victories in the competitions held in Moscow, the town of Trapani in Sicily, and, lastly, in Pretoria.

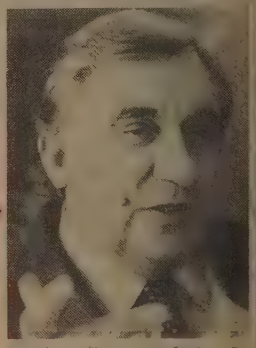
Alexander seems to be one of those who can turn even an unfavourable situation to their advantage. In his childhood, he dreamed of becoming a pianist, but entered the cellist class at the Gnesins music school, only because there was a vacancy there. Several years later, he was praised as a rising star. The illness interrupted his career, but it also gave him time for reflection. Knyazev's playing has changed qualitatively. It is possible that the master classes he conducts in France or South Korea are the beginning of his new success.

L. Dolgacheva

* * *

The Association of European Studies made itself known before it could be registered officially. It is headed by doctor of economics **Yuri Borko,** who is known in the academic world not only for his numerous articles (published in *New Times* too), but also for his love of travelling in a canoe. Academician **Vitaly Zhurkin,** chairman of the board of the Association, has founded and heads the Institute of Europe. In the time free from his administrative duties and academic studies, he likes to stroll in the main streets of the capital from one second-hand bookseller to another, looking for rare books.

Thanks to the organizing abilities of the leaders or



perhaps the warm desire of students of European affairs to unite, the Association now has seven regional groups and nine groups are in the process of formation.

The idea of studying the experience of the European Community has captivated the students of European affairs so much that they are not embarrassed even by the bleak prospects of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Well, in the latter half of the 1940s, the economic and political integration of Europe also seemed possible only to confirmed optimists. Moreover, they did not have an Association of European Studies or the possibility to study the experience of the European Community. Nevertheless, they have coped with their task.

* * *

"I was shooting my latest film in the state of a constant erection," admits

School for those who do not want to study

Nelya Budagova, the principal of a new school in Mosfilmovskaya Street in Moscow, believes that the main thing in her work is to do no harm to children. Together with her colleagues who share her ideas, she opened an unofficial educational establishment, called "a school of the future." In this school, the government standards of the school programme are mastered not only by gifted, but by all children.

Children, who want to study and those who don't, are admitted to the school without a competition and personal interviews. Concern is shown first of all for psychologically vulnerable children who fear the mad pace of lessons in overcrowded classrooms, the irritation of tired teachers, who are offended by a lack of consideration on the part of teachers or have resigned themselves to reproaches with being idle and lazy, and who, having missed the subject because of illness, are unable to make up for lost time. "We are like doctors," Nelya Budagova says. "Tell us about the ailment of children, and we shall help to cure them."

There are 27 teachers for 94 pupils in the school. Two of them are assistant professors and five are candidates of science. Lessons in the school began only five months ago, but the results are striking. "In this school, I feel respect for myself." "In the previous school, the teacher shouted at us, and in this school, everyone loves us." "I understand everything here." Such are the comments of children. "You have instilled the feeling of dignity in our boy." "The most terrible thing for our son would be to lose this school." Such are the comments of parents.

At present, the school in Mosfilmovskaya Street leases several classrooms in the state-run school No. 1214, of which Budagova is also the principal. However, this circumstance does not protect her from the hostile attitude to her ideas on the part of the day-school teachers. The Budagova school was deprived of budget financing, though a commission of deputies of the Western District approved the financing. The district department threatened to raise payment for the lease of empty classrooms in the afternoon several times, though officials know that all incomes of the school come from voluntary donations of parents.

Unfortunately, Nelya Budagova's "school of the future" feels the same indifference and hostility from which her pupils ran away.

Tinto Brass, one of the most scandalous directors of world cinema. Critics described the film as "another provocation" of Brass, who is known to video lovers by such films as *Caligula, Salon Kitty* and *La Chiave* (The Key). His latest film, called *The Way All Women Act,* will be on in Europe this month.

The title is not new. Its author is Mozart, who composed an opera under the same name 200 years ago. If one is to believe the brilliant composer and the Italian film director, who was considered promising some time ago, women always commit adultery. A fervent compliment, an impudent look, and a manifestion of unbridled curiosity are enough for a woman to do that.

Diana, who is played by Claudia Koll (her debut in cinema), is happy in her marriage with Paolo, but she constantly amuses herself with liaisons. Paolo is slightly jealous, but soon concludes that fidelity in love is alien to nature. So it is better to be a cuckold and have grounds for enjoyment. The moral of the film is not quite in the spirit of Mozart, but it is typical of Tinto Brass.

As other films of this director, the latest one also abounds in "frank" scenes. Though the new actress does not have the voluptious shapes of Ingrid Tulin or Stefania Sandrelli, who starred in the previous films of Brass, she managed to fill all the scenes with her charms, displaying a complete lack of shyness.

"The feminists call me a swine, but I adore the shamelessness of women and like to create such conditions for actresses which make them throw off all shame," Tinto Brass says.

* * *

"There was the impression that we were travelling in a desert during a sandstorm. The sleighs did not slide and fell through. We moved at a speed of five kilometres an hour. We would not cover the 700 km which separated us from the opposite edge of Greenland even within three months, whereas we had procured food only for about 40 days. In view of this, I decided to give up this venture."

Such was the end on January 23 of the last desperate venture of **Reinhold Messner,** the world's most famous mountaineer who conquered without an oxygen mask all 14 mountains, each 8,000 metres high, and has now become a polar explorer. It was his old dream to cross Greenland from east to west along the Arctic Circle line without any technical devices and even dogs.

"The conditions were hard, of course," recalls Messner on returning to his home in Munich. "It was 40 degrees below zero outside, and in the tent, temperature did not rise higher than five degrees of frost. Everything had been thought out, beginning with my companions. Norwegians and Russians are the best comrades for such a travel. We forgot, however, that it was practically impossible to dry clothes in Greenland during winter, and we made our 11-day tour towards the west and back in wet clothes. But I will return to Greenland in 1994 and cover this path."

During his life, Messner organized more than 60 major expeditions, and at least 15 times had to retreat.

On reading a cycle of lectures at the university and making a documentary for television, Messner plans two more expeditions at the last limit of human possibilities. There will be no mountain climbing, only trips by foot with a knapsack behind the shoulder." The first expedition will be organized to the Takla Makan "desert of death" in the south-west of China, and the other expedition – 1,000 km-long – along drifting ice floes in the North Pole.

The first lady of the PLO

When Yassir Arafat, the 62-year-old leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization, broke the vow of celibacy and married **Soha Tawil,** a tall blonde from his reception room, a new uprising began against him in Palestinian circles.

Soha, 28, comes from a rich family in Jerusalem (her father Daud is a major banker). A Christian by religion, she received a good education, the foundation of which was laid in a Catholic school at Al-Ablis, in the Israeli-occupied territories. After that Soha studied at the Sorbonne University. A young Palestinian, fluent in French and English, brilliantly defended her thesis in economics. While in Paris, she actively joined the political struggle.

The first meeting between Soha Tawil and Yassir Arafat took place at the Paris Hotel Le Crayon, during the official visit of the Palestinian leader to France. The PLO leader could not resist the charms of the young activist and offered her a job in his office.

Their wedding was held last October, unknown to the world and even Soha's parents. The orthodoxes from the Palestinian Resistance Movement demanded the resignation of Arafat. "Abu Ammar (the party nickname of Arafat) has betrayed our sacred cause. He must resign." Such leaflets are today distributed not only in the occupied territories, but also in Tunisia, where the PLO headquarters are situated. The radical nationalists could not forgive that Arafat's wife is a Christian. Before the wedding, Soha had to adopt Islam.

Apart from religious, there were much more prosaic motives. The large sums on accounts in Swiss banks, known only to Arafat, make him "an unsinkable aircraft carrier" in the stormy waters of Palestinian politics. Until a certain time, the undivided control over the "party funds" did not arouse protest among Palestinians. Abu Ammar didn't have any "bad habits." His associates now fear that the young and ambitious "first lady" will lay her hand on the party funds which have noticeably shrunk after the PLO's rupture with the oil kings of the Persian Gulf states.

I. Menshikov,
RIA Novosti correspondent
exclusive for *New Times*
TUNIS

FROM THE XXth CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Introduced by *New Times* analyst **Rostislav Zolotaryov**

Quite recently, an international conference on the origins of totalitarianism, of the type assumed in Russia after the October 1917 coup, was held by the Gorbachev Foundation. The reports turned in to the conference (in which such authoritative scholars as Alexander Tsipko, Igor Klyamkin, Alexei Salmin, Yuri Pivovarov, Andranik Migranyan, Erik Solovyov and Robert C. Tucker took part) have reminded us once more how important it is to explore the phenomenon of Bolshevism in the world's broadest sense, not necessarily related to communism. In the opinion of this country's and foreign scholars, the democratic revolutionary process in Russia has not yet acquired an irreversible character.

History is said to repeat as a farce – if it does. It would be nice if it were only that. We've had more than enough farcical episodes and figures. It will be a tragedy if they turn out to be symptoms of history repeated, there would be nothing of a comedy in all that at all. The phenomenon of "the mobbing masses" in the Moscow streets last month is a clear indication of that. However, "the mobbing masses" are nothing specific to Russia alone, but it's precisely here that this phenomenon led to the "barbarization of history" in 1917. One of the first attempts to explain this phenomenon of the mobbing masses was made by a Russian publicist, I. Larsky, who was rather well known in those days. (Unfortunately, we have failed to find any biographical data relating to him, though his name was widely known early in this century, because Larsky contributed to many thick magazines and newspapers.) His article "On the threshold of counterrevolution" was written straight after the events, yet it is surprisingly profound.

The purport of the article was to place the genuine forces which had accomplished the coup. The author's conclusion: it was done by the inert mob which had been engendered by the weakening and disintegration of all economic and cultural ties in the state. It was a consequence of the disruption of economic life, the unsettled problem of food supplies, the growth of unemployment, and the crash of the military machine, resulting in a quick and continual demoralization of the masses and in the loss of civic feelings, coupled with a predilection of mobs for the vague ideals of a "socialist paradise" and the complete lack of scruples as far as means are concerned.

The article is free from shallow invectives against Bolsheviks; it emphasizes the analysis of the "riot situation," in which such "personages" as "Bolsheviks," the "Constituent Assembly" and the "State Duma" are no more than metaphorical or allegorical figures, while counterrevolution is either a complete power of mobs or a dictatorship which comes in order to bridle the riotous mob. By contrast, the genuine revolution is a self-organization of society. Will our present power be able to promote this process if it tries to rely on the new nascent social strata while being forced to reckon with the mood of the masses ready to turn into a mob? Will it be sufficient to change milestones alone – replace the will for power with that for social life, regarding the state not as a source of power, but only as a coordinating body – precisely as suggested by Larsky? Will it be possible to thereby reach a concord of all personal, group and local interests in the achievement of common national tasks? All these are open questions thus far.

On the threshold of counterrevolution

I. Larsky

Every time – and it occurs every day – that former secret police agents, provocateurs, small pick-pockets and big burglars, inveterate pogromists, home-baked and international adventurists are exposed in the highest echelons of the present revolutionary activists; every time that cries of malicious joy and immaculate helplessness hurt in its best feelings are heard in this connection, I involuntarily feel a sort of psychic tranquility. Involuntarily – because I am also against rogues, secret agents and traitors, because I also in any situation give preference to immaculacy. Yet I can't get rid of the sly suggestiveness of the old rioter Mikhail Bakunin's assertions that if rogues resort to revolutionary methods, it means that revolution enjoys success.

"So many rogues!" I repeat every day following Bakunin – "ergo, the third revolution is winning," consequently, the "government of peasants and workers" has really consolidated its positions... The locomotive of socialism is running at full speed and the rogues are sure to catch the train!

No one in the world knows how socialist society is born – so much the less reasons to believe that it is the result of an immaculate conception with a prior annunciation, without blood, shooting, violence, without active suport by adventurist circles and fraud of leaders coming to the fore.

Such are my subjective impressions. They upset the resoluteness of the present situation's political assessment, because the issue of expediency and of political prevision is inevitably placed now above the obvious fact that living and acting are the masses alone and that these masses support the Bolsheviks. However, an objective analysis immediately makes a correction: not the masses, but a mob.

The mob literally attacks all issues of global importance, it "juggles" slogans of the most profound social significance like stones extracted from the pavement under its feet. And this movement of the all-Russian mob is, apparently, the only reality of our times. The Bolsheviks no more than assumed the role of Her Majesty the Mob's heralds, reducing all their policy to incessantly looking back to see if they have deviated to the right while the mob has turned left. All other parties exist as shadows of objects which don't even exist . When Mensheviks and Socialist Revolutionaries hold on to a concord with the Bolsheviks, they actually reckon with sole reality: the Bolsheviks are one with the masses, and there can be no popular political tactics outside a union with the Bolsheviks.

There is no doubt that the "heralds" won't keep the right direction long. The hurried, illiterate and abounding in errors copying of whatever decrees come their way alone betrays the feverish fuss reigning supreme in their headquarters.

Bolshevism is a rudimentary form of political thinking designed for the mob, and as long as the mob retains the need for an organized joint manifestation, Bolshevism will provide for a form of unity requiring the least amount of organizing efforts from them. Bolshevism is a revolution of the mob's passiveness and apathy as regards the aims requiring reshaping of the mob into an organization of the masses which possesses a certain minimum of structural complexity. Is this socialism? There can't be two opinions about it. The success of the Bolsheviks is based on their monstrous proximity to the expectations of the inert and counterproductive mob of the remotest fruits the socialist system is going to bear, where everyone is guaranteed the opportunity to have everything according to his or her needs. The socio-political and personal conditions required for the materialization of this possibility are, of course,

deliberately by-passed in the promises made by the Bolsheviks. All this is replaced by the thrust of the seizure of the compulsion power apparat, the bright picture of seizure of power imparting the extremely revolutionary character to every action by the Bolsheviks. And yet power is seized by the economically passive, inert and incoherent mob, and not by a new productive organization gripped in the vices of capital. In this self-determination of power, the hyperthrophied political mood is as salient a feature of a self-disorganizing mob as is the cult of parliamentary methods in the case of political parties ossified in the bourgeois framework. Neither of these feels the pulse of genuine social life and both are doomed to death.

It's not for nothing that the latest action by the Bolsheviks was the declaring of Constitutional Democrats, the emphatically parliamentary party of our bourgeoisie, enemies of the people and decreeing their arrest. Nothing more absurd from the tactical point of view could be invented in the conditions of our revolution. It's even impossible to invent accusations against Constitutional Democrats for the simple reason that they, like all others, are doing nothing – all are equally overpowered by the state of dull helplessness and Slavonic resignation to their fate. Yet psychologically, the attack namely on Constitutional Democrats, i.e., the counterposing of the "revolutionary power" of the mob, without genuine power, to a strictly constitutional party without a constitution, is the unavoidable completion of the vicious circle of our revolution. The hyperthrophy of the scarcity of our cultural and economic values in the social respect, regardless of whether it is oriented to a revolutionary conversion of all "values" into political energy of power or to the strictly parliamentary employment of the existent social material for the purposes of the architectonics of power, equally results in atrophy of power.

The mob as the only real force in our political life has been able to create only a phantasmagoria of monstrous conspiracies

Emphasizing the power issue in our conditions can result only in anarchy. This equally applies not only to the Bolsheviks who have contributed to this "emphasizing" most, but also to any other party which sees its objective in the "due" organizing of power, be it coalition, homogeneously socialist, bourgeois-socialist, or any other kind of power. Nobody will ever be able to do anything in the conditions of the rapid and continuous demoralization of the masses. *Before we start to build, we must find the ways to remove the elements of decomposition.* Since March, we are breathing in the thick dust of the construction waste and we won't be able to make a step forward without stumbling over the hideous ruins of the state. The entire revolutionary period is nothing more than a series of crashes of socio-political props.

The monarchy collapsed with an incredibly astounding easiness as soon as a blow was dealt on its foundation – the disintegrating army... Further demoralization of the military, coupled with the intense process of disintegration of the entire economic mechanism and, consequently, with the decomposition of the proletariat whose class energy was doomed to economically senseless dissipation, overthrew first the capitalist ministers and then the socialist ones with the same easiness. This is not the right word, however – they were not overthrown but simply fell, because nothing can stand on this quagmire.

Certainly, Bolshevism holds on now not because it has found a firm hummock in this quagmire, leaning on which it will be able to turn the entire bourgeois world upside down. The Bolsheviks may assure the world that they have a strong support in the person of the Soviet of Workers' and Soldiers' Deputies. Their leaders know only too well that it is necessary to jump over to a new hummock at the right moment – to a new Soviet, or only to the Central Executive Committee of Soviets, or, which is the simplest thing to do, just to rely on the Red Guardsmen's bayonets.

If somebody prefers to call the sharpness of these convulsive actions gestures of power, let him do so. The Bolsheviks know something else. Shooting the shells of international socialism from their native bog, they feel the heavy recoil which thrusts them in the depth of the inert and disorganized masses. Therefore crying about the support the Soviets provide for them, they seek support outside these masses. Bolshevism can be saved only by counterrevolution nestling outside the masses, therefore Bolsheviks invent incredible conspiracies, mounting one lie upon another and employing all sorts of provocative and pogromist technique, as well as the brand-new secret police methods, in order to engineer counterrevolution. The mob as the only reality of our political life has been able to create nothing but a phantasmagoria of monstrous conspiracies.

The pogromist treating of all socialist parties has yielded no tangible results. Provocative actions against state functionaries and generally against all those involved in executive activity also has failed to expose counterrevolutionaries. The Cossacks are a too remote and evasive social reality. The recent attack on Constitutional Democrats only finally dipped the chastising hand of Bolshevism into a marsh of inactive political party having no strength to resist and of equally inert revolutionary democracy of the Constituent Assembly. At the moment even the Bolsheviks themselves are hesitant to decide on whom the next blow will fall – the Constitutional Democratic Party or the Constituent Assembly.

There is no counterrevolution, and, in all evidence, there is no counterrevolution only because there is no revolution.

In what sense, indeed, is it possible to talk about a revolution meeting on its path with no resistance at all? Although since March we live under the sign of a struggle for power, it remains no more than a sign covering an empty space, because nobody in fact opposes the state power being seized by whoever so desires. The most striking example: the dissolution of the Petrograd City Council, the first body elected by universal, direct, equal and secret vote. The elections to the new revolutionary "commune" were held with hardly one fourth of the electorate. If it is taken into account that, first, a considerable share in this one fourth belongs to those aged 18 who have no right to elect the Constituent Assembly; that, second, the Petrograd electorate gave the Bolsheviks much more votes at the elections to the Constituent Assembly than at the elections to the city "commune," the picture of struggle for the municipal power takes on a very piquant character. An absolutely insignificant part of the population has seized power, while about 80 percent of the bourgeoisie and both rank-and-file and revolutionary (even in the Bolshevik phraseology) democrats have indifferently receded under Bolshevik pressure! At that, it is not to be forgotten that the voting minority was driven to the polling booths for the whole four days, every time being granted one more day to "seize power," "for the last time at the public's request," so to speak. In short, no struggle at all.

Alongside it, the content of the revolution which is being more and more clearly realized now touches upon the cardinal question of our political existence which has long and to no avail been replaced by that of the structure for power. Let the Bolsheviks deepen the revolution and assert its positive aspect by organizing its negative side – counterrevolution. Nothing more is left for them, as the present "power," to do. The genuine forces of revolutionary creativity are faced with a different task – that of organizing their own centres of influence.

If the Constituent Assembly is viewed from the viewpoint of authority and if it is interpreted exclusively as a source of properly organized power, the advocates of this position are bound to be bitterly disappointed. The fate of the Moscow State Conference, the Petrograd Democratic Conference and of the "preparliament" is an ill omen for that sort of Constituent Assembly. As power, as the defender of power, as the dam protecting power against the pressure of the socially obscurant mob, the Constituent Assembly may prove as weak as its forerunners. But, depending on the further development of the revolution, there can appear a different outcome for the movement of the masses, and the Constituent Assembly may as well acquire a different meaning.

When late in February, the State Duma became a universally recognized centre of instantly accumulated revolutionary energy, dispersed in various strata of the population – this did not happen because the State Duma could, by its origin, composition or traditions, claim for the popular authority. The Duma's experience testified to the opposite. But in the historical circumstances of the time, there were only two political fulcra: the tsarist autocracy and the Duma. There was no option. Thus, a speck of dust, which gets into a saturated solution, turns into the focus of an excellent crystalline formation. When the revolution was threatened by the Kornilov offensive late in August, workers and even the Kronstadt sailors immediately consolidated around the Kerensky government, although two months before, both Kerensky himself and his government were the target of open and concentrated criticism by the same "revolutionary democracy." However, the choice was either Kerensky or Kornilov.

The major issue of a revolution is not that of power, but the question of organizing production – those who want to consume must also produce

In both cases there was no centre of gravity as a stronghold of power. In both cases, the live forces of democracy grouped naturally and spontaneously where there was the only support for opposing the oncoming calamity. All drawbacks of the old regime and the revolutinary period termed "disorder" seemed to vanish without leaving a trace on those days of trial. Now the danger lurks inside, in the mob itself.

When soldiery devoid of the most elementary civic feelings ravages wine depots and gets drunk to the loss of consciousness, these are the terrible signs of the last limit beyond which a revolution itself becomes a counterrevolution. The Bolsheviks make desperate efforts to separate one from the other, declaring through their paper *Pravda* that the soldiers are made to drink by Constitutional Democrats. This ignoble subterfuge does not, however, save the shameful situation, and "the revolutionary garrison" does not see a difference between revolution and counterrevolution any more. Since recently the same "revolutionary" soldiers come into collision with the Red Guards over the issue of different monetary assessment of the army's and the proletariat's revolutionary services. Lastly, the proletariat itself increasingly falls apart into more or less clearly delineated groups of varying salaries. These conflicts reach beyond their midst more and more often, and since the gap between the positions of better organized and less strong professional groups is really striking, the group egoism and the group "patriotism" replace more and more definitely the imitation of a common class interest so noisily staged by the Bolsheviks. Local "patriotism" and various factory committees' predatory positions are well known to all who have dealt with them. Brought to despair by the all-around economic disorder, the masses will inevitably pass from unsuccessful attempts to achieve the common task to the egoistically blind implementation of local and group plans. Hence, the tough internal competition for profit, and since the Bolsheviks have provided them with all conceivable means of "democratic self-determination," the intensity of destruction of the revolution will apparently match the level of Russian contempt for culture, statehood and the country's common interests. This is called counterrevolution. The only meaning of this paradoxical conclusion is that we will be able to draw and drink only a few gulps of water out of this powerful stream of freedom showering on our country, for we are technically unable to take more.

So much the more terrible is the fate of those who had no chance to partake of the salutary liquid. This is the fate of victims of counterrevolution, which doesn't require to wait for a general riding a white horse. Counterrevolution lies in the desperate orgy of political construction, in the power which opened all lock-gates without having prepared channels to canalize the stream. Bolshevism of the masses is the beginning of counterrevolution, and the revolution can be saved only in the situation of a planned use of the chaotic movement of the masses. If the circumstances make it possible for the Constituent Assembly to channel in the right direction the energy of the workers, who have no opportunity to make certain about the usefulness of their labour, and of peasants who wait for land to be given to them, and of soldiers exhausted by the war; if the Constituent Assembly finds a plan to "demobilize" democracy artificially revolutionized by Bolshevism, its revolutionary function will be fulfilled; otherwise there will appear a multitude of Constituent Assemblies which willy-nilly will have to solve the problem of revolutionary demobilization on a local level. The organization of power will come of itself as soon as the country's economic life is consolidated.

The Constituent Assembly is faced with the most difficult and important task – *to organize not the will for power, but the will for social life.* It is necessary to get rid at last of shallow party combinations designed to rule the people. No mechanism of compulsion exists now which could make the masses recognize some power or other.

Instead, there exists, or will soon arise, the necessity for the masses to organically unite their economic activities, the need for a state not as a source of power but as a coordinating body. It's possible that this need will be satisfied by local institutions. But their recognition and development in the required direction will be an obviously necessary step to be made by the Constituent Assembly. Democracy, involved in the process of self-regulation, will create the state structure, which will protect it from disintegration. Involving the present revolutionary democracy in this work and providing it with a plan and guidance in independent social activity is precisely the question of the Constituent Assembly's authority.

Prepared for publication by Valentin Manuilov (Penza)

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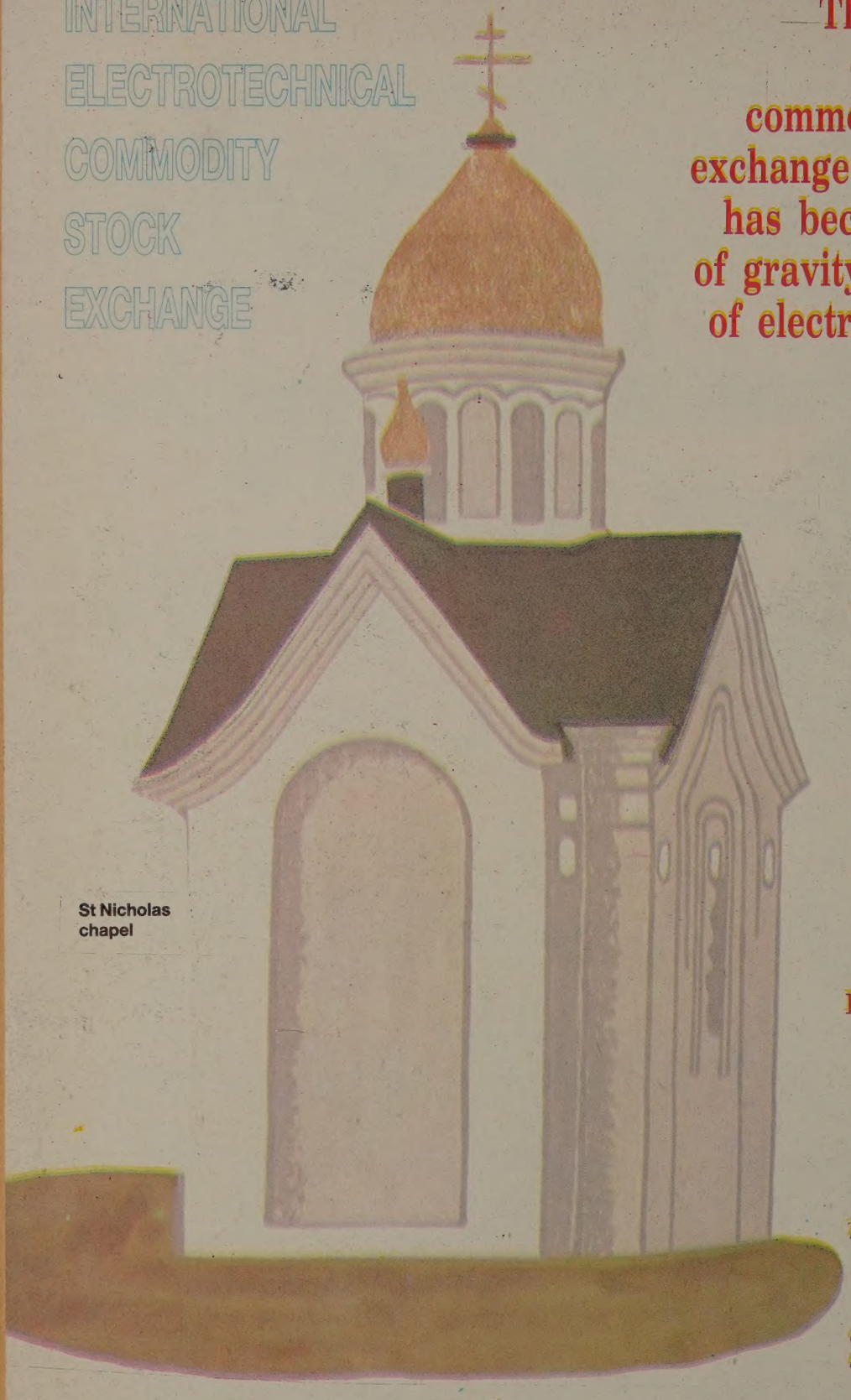

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